

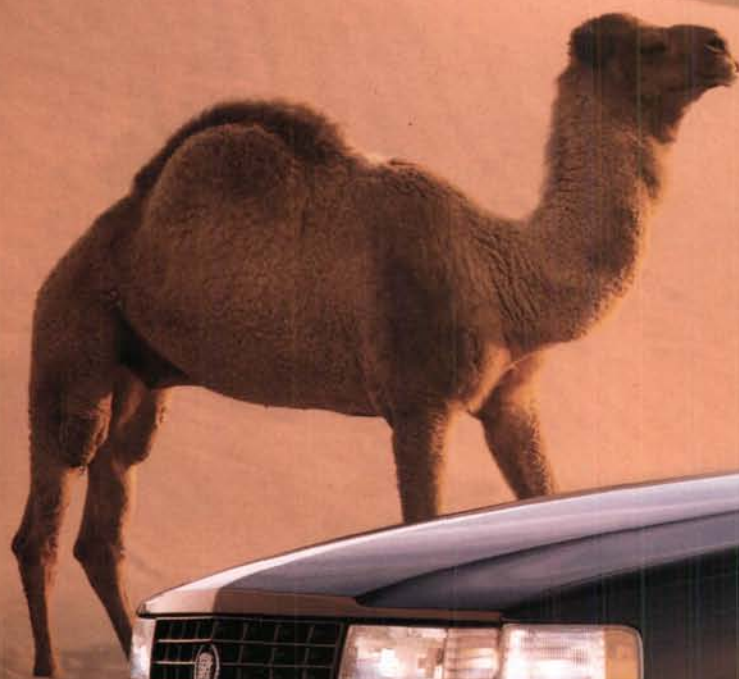
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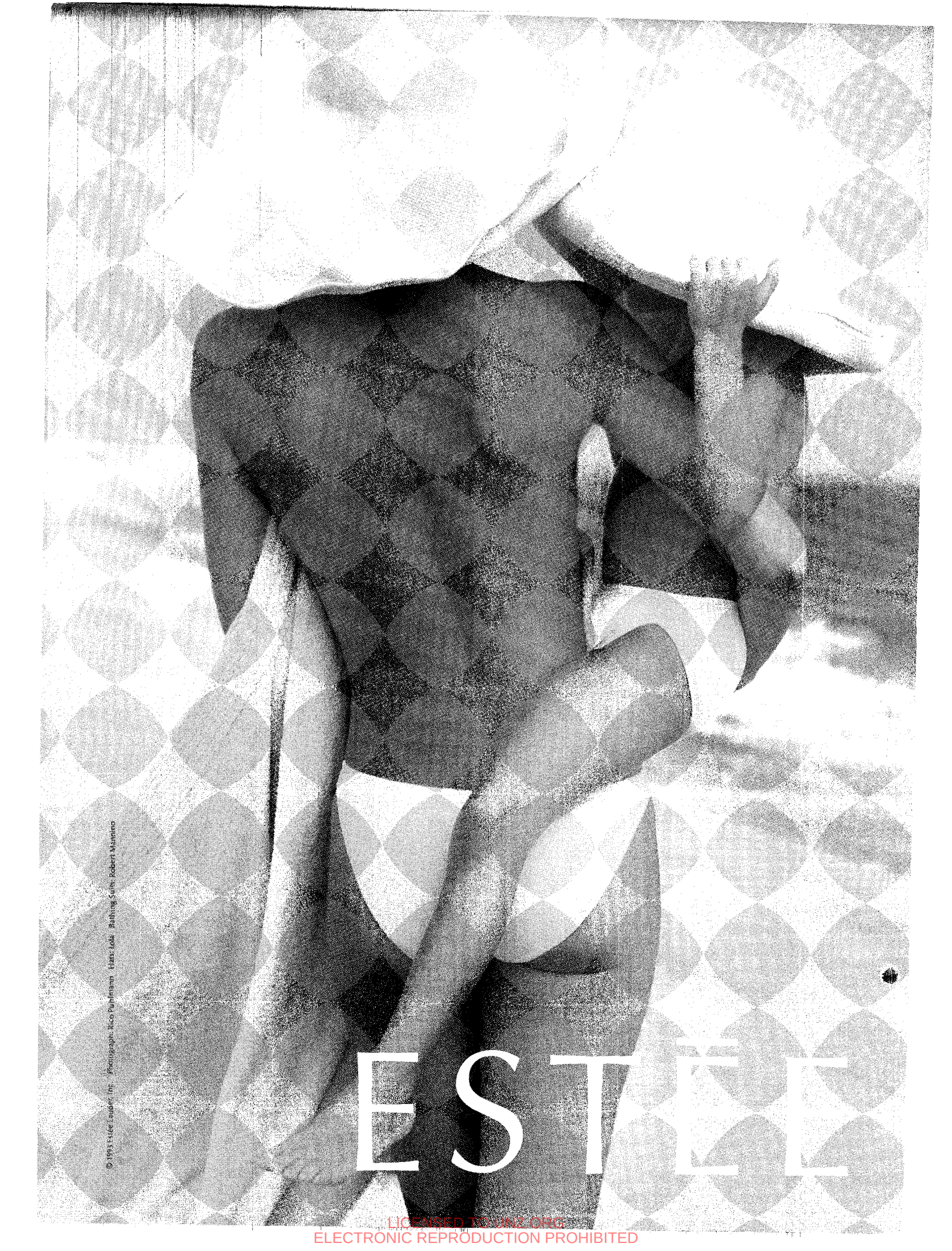
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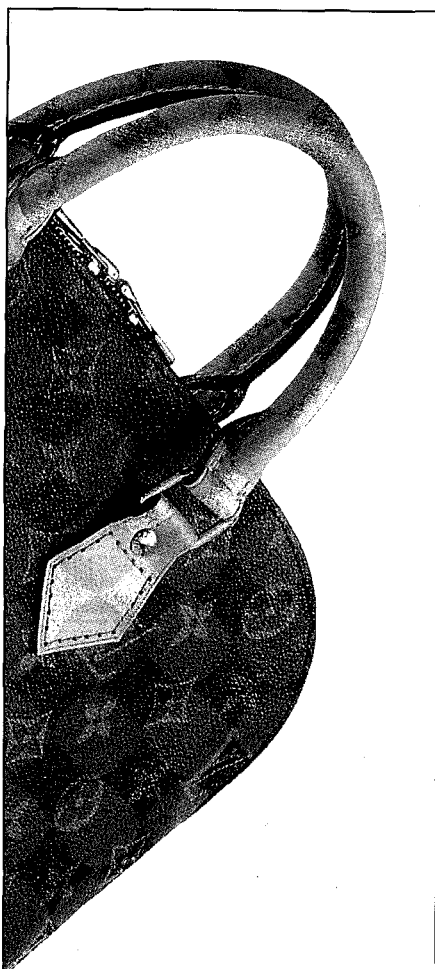
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THE NEW YORKER

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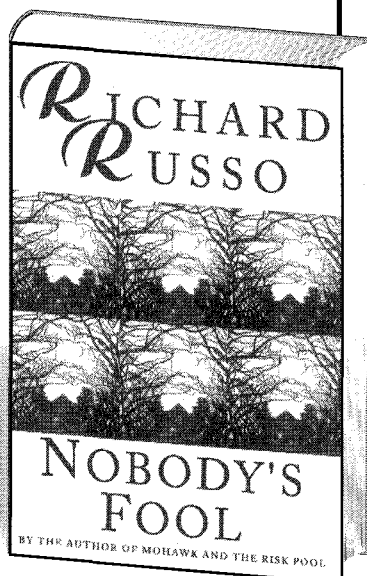
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THE MEN'S FRAGRANCE BY RALPH LAUREN

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COMMENT

WHO'S BOSS

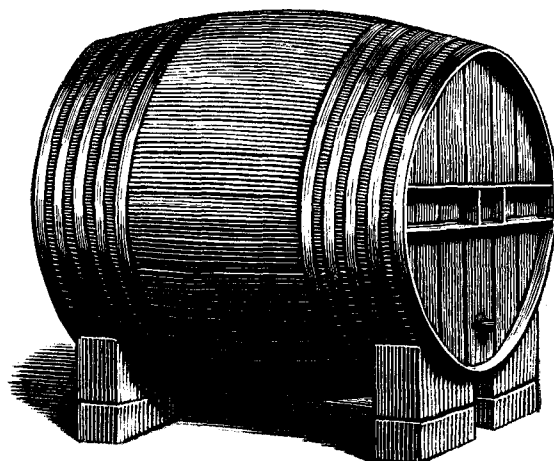
DOWN on the banks of the Potomac, where the Hundred Days seems to have given way to the End of Days, the opinion of the political eschatologists is unanimous: on top of the haircut fiasco and the Travel Office snafu, President Clinton is in big trouble with the Pentagon. In the *Times* a week or so ago, Michael Kelly quoted Joshua Muravchik, "a neo-conservative foreign-policy analyst who was disappointed in his bid for a high State Department position," as deploring "the cavalier treatment of the military as an institution." Fences to be mended there, Bill. The story of the Big Snub, which is to say the moment in January when a female White House staffer supposedly told a visiting general that "I don't talk to the military," is still sending out echoes of what seemed from the start the suspiciously hollow clank of fake coinage. Ross Perot talks, with bogus concern, about the distressed phone calls he gets each day from his friends in the military, and says he tells his soldier friends that "discipline must be maintained." What Mr. Perot obviously feels is that the President just isn't reaching out to the military the way he

ought to. The assumption underlying all this is that the military are essentially a social group—an independent source of power and influence—that has to be courted, placated, appeased, bargained with, *understood*.

That assumption is profoundly hostile to a basic principle of American constitutionalism—the principle that the military are a completely depoliticized and obedient instrument of the will of the elected civilian power. This is not just an agreeable ideal or a more or less accepted precedent; it is the essence of our constitutional arrangement. The President of the United States is under no obligation to search for common ground with his generals, because the American military are not an independent social unit. They are not an interest group. They are not a constituency, like farmers or Hispanics. They are an instrument of an elected President, and that is all they are. Ross Perot should not be telling his soldier friends to maintain discipline; he should be telling them to get the hell off the phone.

It may be objected that this offers an unrealistic picture of the relations between civilians and soldiers. It is unrealis-

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tic—that's the point. It was always meant to be. This subordination of the military to civilian government has been understood from the start to be an "unnatural"—or, anyway, improbable—arrangement. That is why the framers fretted so about the dangers of a standing Army. In too many countries around the world, the military have a big say in how the country is run: after all, the military are the guys with the guns, and the more numerous the guns the bigger the say. It is the genius of our system that the natural tendency of men wearing uniforms to boss men wearing suits has been unnaturally curbed, through an almost fetishistic insistence that the military can never, and must never, be made a separate party to power.

It is also the genius of American government that this subordination has never been seen as an affront to the honor of professional fighting men and women—which is real, and which it is important to cultivate. On the contrary, the idea that soldiers have no politics has in a sense ennobled them—allowed them to become the sole class that has been *above* politics. George C. Marshall was a hero to liberals and conservatives alike partly because he understood that his credibility as a national figure depended

on his reputation for having no Bonapartist ambitions at all. Dwight D. Eisenhower understood this, too, and there are still generals who get it. General Merrill McPeak, the Air Force chief of staff, is one. Recently, at a press briefing put on by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to announce the military's new policy of allowing women to fly combat aircraft, General McPeak was asked about his opposition to that policy. "Well, we had a discussion period in which my views were asked, and I gave my honest opinion," he said. "If I hadn't, I think the Secretary should have fired me. Now the Secretary has made a decision, and it's my job to implement that decision as well as I can. And if I don't do that he should fire me for that."

It is easy to see why the press is inclined to see lobbying from the Pentagon as unexceptionable. With the Cold War over, the military services do look rather like just another of the interest groups that dominate American life. One of the reasons that Americans feel overtaxed, even though by the standards of the other industrialized democracies they are undertaxed, is that we see less of our tax money than taxpayers elsewhere do, and one reason we see less is that so much of

the money has been poured into planes and tanks and missiles that nobody but a tiny professional class ever sees or has anything to do with. The only way you can learn where all that money is going is to read Tom Clancy novels, and that's probably why so many Americans do. (There has to be *some* reason.) The military have become just another group that gets a lot of money from the government, and we've come to expect people who get a lot of money from the government—senior citizens, farmers, generals—to try to tell the government what it ought to do.

The larger issue of military subordination is independent of the particular issue that set off the recent friction—whether or not to accept gays in the military. It is possible to believe that the military may have a point on this issue and at the same time to believe that the military are not there to make points—at least, not publicly. Their position is not a matter of decorum, or of precedent, or of "good relations." It is constitutional, and it is absolute. Bill should borrow the Harry Truman biography that George Bush was reading last fall and turn to the pages describing what Truman did during the First World War. Truman had been sent from Missouri to France as a "civilian" officer—a first lieutenant—elected by the local Missouri militia, as National Guard officers still were then. On his first day in command of a battery in the 129th Field Artillery, the soldiers he was commanding treated him with disdain: they listened to him contemptuously and then gave him a big Bronx cheer. The next morning, Harry demoted—"busted"—a few of the company's N.C.O.s. Then he called in the others and told them, "I didn't come over here to get along with *you*. You've got to get along with *me*."

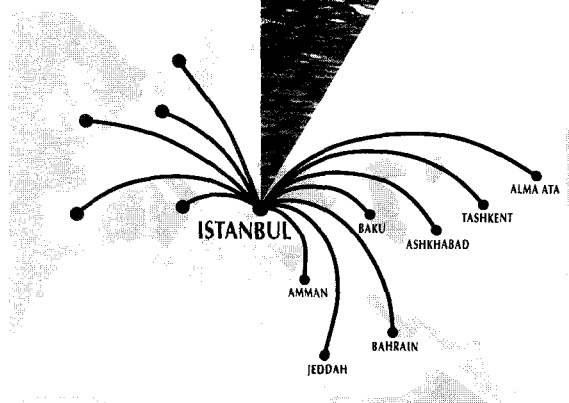
Bill Clinton, of course, is famous for liking to get along with everybody. He plans to visit the Vietnam shrine on the Mall on Memorial Day, and his White House has set up a series of "military orientation tours" of ships and bases for its young staffers. Go to it, Bill. But the next time you get a Bronx cheer from your generals, why not repeat Truman's words about just who, ultimately, is supposed to do the getting along? ♦



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THE THEATRE

Curtain Calls

FOR Broadway performers, May is the cruellest month: not only must they do eight shows a week but they must do almost that many lunches, too. Every professional group seems to be holding some kind of event, and every Tony nominee, past and present, is expected to attend. As the choreographers Christopher Chadman and Wayne Cilento sang, at a fête for a star named Verdon (to benefit New Dramatists, a group that encourages playwrights), "You gotta have Gwen." And—this year, at least—Tony and Ron and George.

Speaking of that threesome from "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches," the spirit embodied in the play's subtitle seems to have had an effect on the organizers of a benefit for the Atlantic Theatre Company, to be held on June 7 at the Supper Club (call 645-8015 for information). The evening's theme is "The End of . . ." and the playwrights who have created the evening's program have interpreted the theme in different ways. Howard Korder has written something about "the end of communication," and Craig Lucas's playlet charts "the end of a relationship." David Mamet takes the prize for generality. One of his contributions will explore "life, the end of it, and what it all means." All of it—the evening, that is—will be broadcast live starting at 9 P.M. over WFMU (91.1 FM).

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

DOWN THE ROAD—A psychological drama by Lee Blessing, with John Dossett, Lisa Eichhorn, and Eric Stoltz. In previews. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

EXTENDED FORECAST—Estelle Parsons stars in a play by Franz Xaver Kroetz. Translated from the German by Erica Bilder and Ms. Parsons. Preview on June 2. Opens June 3 at 8. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

JEWISH REPERTORY THEATRE—Presenting a revised version of the 1970 musical *SHOW ME WHERE THE GOOD TIMES ARE*. With Robert Ari and Roslyn Kind. Previews begin June 5. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

A PERFECT GANESH—A new play by Terrence McNally, with Zoe Caldwell, Dominic Cuskern, Frances Sternhagen, and Fisher Stevens. Previews begin June 4. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

PLAYLAND—A two-character play by Athol Fugard that premièred last summer at the

GOINGS ON
ABOUT TOWN

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David Lewman and George Wendt in "Wild Men!"

Market Theatre in Johannesburg. Frankie R. Faison and Kevin Spacey make up the cast. Previews through June 6. Opens June 8 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

SHEILA'S DAY—A brief engagement of a Crossroads Theatre Company play. Written by Duma Ndlovu and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, the work concerns two domestic workers—one in Alabama, the other in South Africa. Opens June 2 at 8 and runs through June 6. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

SHE LOVES ME—A revival of the 1963 musical by Joe Masteroff, Jerry Bock, and Sheldon Harnick. The cast features Jonathan Freeman, Boyd Gaines, Brad Kane, Judy Kuhn, Sally Mayes, Howard McGillin, Lee Wilkof, and Louis Zorich. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

TEN BELOW—A play by Shem Bitterman, with Kevin Conway and Anthony Edwards. In previews. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

TOTIE—A musical based on the life of the comedienne Totie Fields. Book by Bobby Pearce and Nancy Timpanaro and score and lyrics by Robert Bendorff. In previews. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ANGELS IN AMERICA: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES—The first half of Tony Kushner's epic work is set in 1985, at the height of the Reagan counter-revolution, and it maps the trickle-down effect of self-interest as Kushner's characters ruthlessly pursue their private and public destinies. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play is a saga about sexual politics, death, and decency. Not to be missed. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/31/93.) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

BLOOD BROTHERS—A glum non-musical musical, imported from Britain, about twin boys who are separated at birth. (Their mother, a cleaning woman, gives one of them to her employer.) The boys become friends, love the same girl, and die violent deaths. Willy Russell, whose credentials are good, wrote book, music, and lyrics, to no avail. With Con O'Neill, Stephanie Lawrence, Jan Gravenon, and Mark Michael Hutchinson. (5/10/93) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

BUYA AFRICA—A musical with Thuli Dumakude. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE—The 1993 marathon of one-acts continues with "Seventh Word, Fourth Syllable," by Susan Kim; "Cosmo's in Love," by Bill Bozzone, with Robert Pastorelli; "The Rehearsal," by Joyce Carol Oates; and "Where's Mamie?," a musical by Michael John LaChiusa. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Closes June 13.)

FOOL MOON—Bill Irwin and David Shiner are the inspired clowns in a show that is perfection itself. The only sound you'll hear is the merry music of the Red Clay Ramblers and the abundant laughter of the audience. (3/8/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1993—Once again, a galaxy of parodies that sharpen into satire. This edition is as witty as most of its predecessors. Among the newer shows under consideration are "Guys and Dolls" and "Falsettos," and the holdovers include "Les Misérables" and "The Phantom of the Opera." Gerard Alessandrini, as if you had to be told, is the clever writer and director, and Susanne Blakeslee, Dorothy Kiara, Brad Oscar, and Craig Wells are the splendid performers, doing a large assortment of roles. (1/25/93) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

THE GOODBYE GIRL—Bernadette Peters and Martin Short, two brilliant, funny stars, transform this otherwise indifferent musical adaptation of Neil Simon's movie into a sporadically festive evening. The dances by Graciela Daniele are more than helpful, as is the comic support by John Christopher Jones. Score by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by David Zippel. Michael Kidd directed. (3/15/93) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

HELLO MUDDAH, HELLO FADDUH—A musical based on the song parodies of Allan Sherman ar offering further proof that Camp Lite is taking over Off Broadway. The show was conceived and written by Douglas Bernstein and Rob Krausz. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

JEFFREY—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS, with John Michael Higgins. It is less a fleshed-out play than a series of Scenes from Gay Life, but Mr. Rudnick can quip with the best of them. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN—A touching musical, based on the novel by Manuel Puig, with a distinguished book by Terrence McNally, a star performance by Brent Carver, as the heroic homosexual window dresser, and an-

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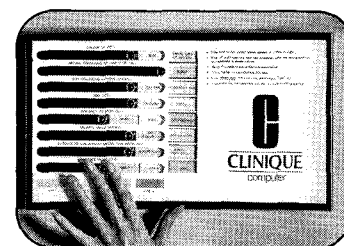
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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

other by the redoubtable Chita Rivera in the title role. Under Harold Prince's masterly direction, the harshness of the story is never elided, yet the action is always lively and often witty and tender. Since the music is deafening, many of the songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb must be taken on faith, but those which can be heard are good. Nothing but praise for the setting by Jerome Sirlin and the costumes by Florence Klotz. With Anthony Crivello, as Mr. Carver's cellmate, and Merle Louise and Kirsti Carnahan. (5/24/93) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

LATER LIFE—In A. R. Gurney's new play, a man and woman who haven't seen each other in thirty years meet up again. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LYPSINKA! A DAY IN THE LIFE—John Epperson—a nonpareil if ever there was one—brings his happiness cocktail to Off Broadway. Epperson has come a long way from his late-night club origins: like Cyd Charisse, one of his M-G-M-era idols, he's a long-legged pro. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

MARISOL—A play by José Rivera, with Cordelia Gonzalez and Danitra Vance. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes June 6.)

MASTER AND MARGARITA—A new play by Jean-Claude van Itallie, based on the 1940 novel of the same name by Mikhail Bulgakov. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Closes June 13.)

OLEANNA—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other topics in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. The play's skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Treat Williams and Mary McCann make up the cast. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

PLAYBOY OF THE WEST INDIES—Mustapha Matura transplants John Millington Synge's "Playboy" from Ireland to Trinidad with total success. That it survives the move so well is due, in part, to Mr. Matura's poetic fluency in wielding the local patois, and, in part, to the distinguished cast, under the direction of Gerald Gutierrez. As the Playboy himself, Victor Love gives a first-rate performance in a first-rate role. He receives strong support from Michele Shay, Lorraine Toussaint, Antonio Fargas, and Arthur French. (5/24/93) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

RACE—Paul Mooney, a black comedian and writer best known for his collaborations with Richard Pryor, is hyperbolically offensive to people of all races in this one-man standup show, yet somehow he ends up seeming honest, and even friendly. Some of his jokes are old, and he occasionally stops for a brief lecture on, say, the evils of Hollywood, but his quick wit and keen commentary carry the show. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

SHAKESPEARE FOR MY FATHER—A marvellous one-woman show, in which Lynn Redgrave reviews her own life in a search for her unloving father, Michael Redgrave. She combines anecdotes, brilliant thumbnail impersonations of British actors, and wry reminiscence with passages from Shakespeare, which she delivers with eloquence and emotion. This essentially serious evening is often as amusing as it is sad. (5/10/93) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

THE SISTERS ROSENSEWIG—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Estabrook, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME—Michael York, David Dukes, and Chuck Cooper portray hostages in Beirut in Frank McGuinness's mov-

ing and humorous play. Robin Lefèvre directed. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THREE HOTELS—This new play by Jon Robin Baitz is no more than a technical exercise, but what technique! Debra Monk and Ron Rifkin are superb as husband and wife; the versatile Joe Mantello directed. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

TIME ON FIRE—This wry, tough, and instructive one-man show by writer-performer Evan Handler is about his successful battle with leukemia. Unfortunately, his acting isn't up to his script; he's generally so matter-of-fact that one almost never feels any real connection to what he's going through. He is a great mimic, though, and his observations on the medical profession are scathing. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. Closes June 3.)

THE WHO'S TOMMY—Pete Townshend's music—however muted for Broadway—has an indubitable thrill, but director Des McAnuff's production is caught on the horns of a theatrical dilemma that no amount of slick, exhausting spectacle can resolve. The hero, that deaf, dumb, and blind kid, is spectacularly passive, and thus unreachable, unknowable, and essentially undramatic. (5/3/93) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

WILD MEN!—Subtitled "A Musical . . . Sort Of," this comedy plays on the edges of something with substance, yet finally possesses little of its own. Set in "the North Woods" on a "Wild Man Weekend," the show makes outrageous mockery of the men's movement, its primal yearnings, and its guru, Robert Bly. Though not penetrating, the evening benefits from the vitality of everyone onstage. "Cheers" survivor George Wendt stars, along with a host of Chicago's Second City alums. The excellent percussion was arranged by Judy Nielsen, founder of the Women's Action Coalition Drum Corps, in Chicago. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

WRONG TURN AT LUNGFISH—The play owes more to day-in, day-out television than it does to the theatre. With Calista Flockhart, Michael E. Knight, Kathleen Marshall, and Fritz Weaver. (3/8/93) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES**: Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS**: Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU**: Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **FALSETTOS**: Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS**: Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleeker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOREVER PLAID**: Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS**: Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JELLY'S LAST JAM**: Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES**: Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON**: Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **THE NIGHT LARRY KRAMER KISSED ME**: Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038. . . . **NUNSENSE**: Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME**: Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**: Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING**: St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES**: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

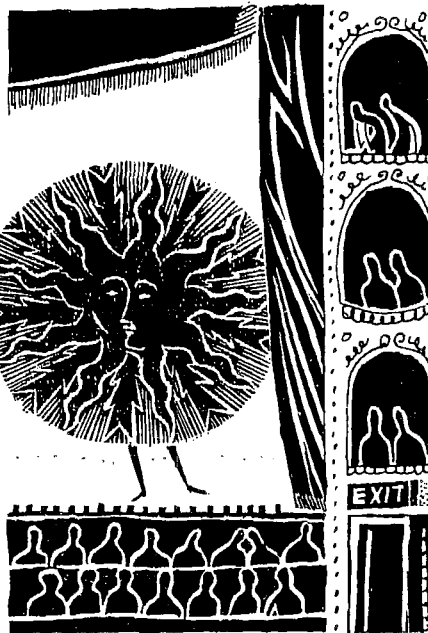
DANCE
Grounded

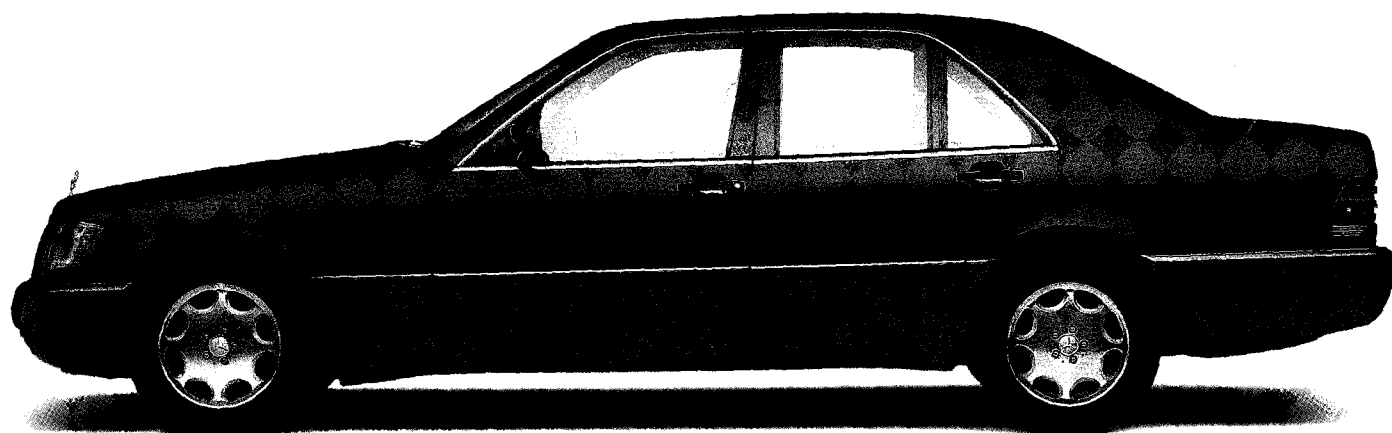
THE annual workshop performances at the School of American Ballet (June 5 at 7 at the Juilliard Theatre) will feature excerpts from diverse ballets in an all-Balanchine program. Two of the excerpts have been staged by Karin von Aroldingen, the ballerina on whom the leads were made: the czardas section of the 1973 "Cortège Hongrois" and the "Tales from the Vienna Woods" movement of the 1977 "Vienna Waltzes." Neither is straight ballet (the czardas is danced in boots, the waltz in heeled slippers), yet both call for a dancer with a strong classical foundation.

Recently, Miss von Aroldingen—whose background includes training in character and social dancing, as well as jazz and modern dance—compared the two excerpts. "For the czardas, the word 'character' says it," she explained. "We're not on our toes but on our heels, and the dance is very forward—outgoing—in feeling. The rhythm is also deep into the ground: one, two, three, four. The waltz is in three-four time. The feeling is more inside than in the czardas. It's romantic, nostalgic. You go through a forest with your sweetheart, playing a lover's game."

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—The Balanchine Celebration, June 2 at 8: "Liebeslieder Walzer" and "Brahms Schoenberg Quartet." . . . June 3 at 8: "Jewels." . . . June 4 at 8: "Raymonda Variations" and "Harlequinade." . . . June 5 at 2: "La Source," "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," the 1967 "Valse-Fantaisie," and "Who Cares?" . . . June 5 at 8: "Jewels." . . . June 6 at 1: "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3," "Firebird," and "Who Cares?" . . . June 6 at 7: "Who Cares?" "Western Symphony," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . June 8 at 8: "Fireworks" (played by the New York City Ballet orchestra), "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Firebird," and "Symphony in Three Movements." (New York

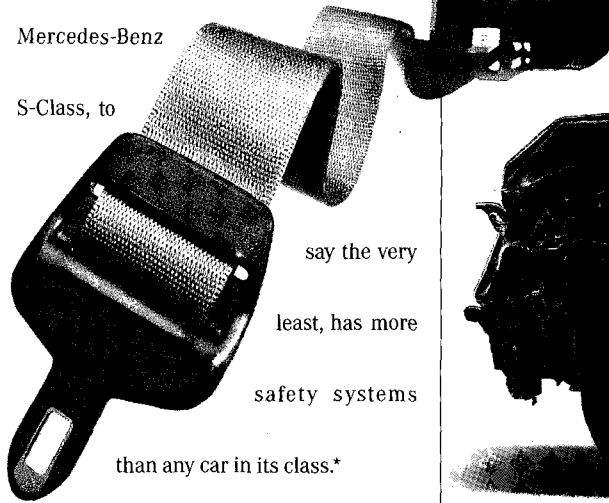
State Theatre, 870-5570. Through June 27.) **AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE**—June 2 at 2 and 8: "Swan Lake." . . . June 3-4 at 8 and June 5 at 2 and 8: "Manon." . . . June 7 at 8: "The Informer," "Three Virgins and a Devil," and "Rodeo." . . . June 8 at 8: "Symphonic Variations," "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" (New York premiere), and "Etudes." (Metropolitan Opera House, 362-6000. Through June 12.) **"ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT"**—The opening performances of this dance showcase, featuring eight companies in shared programs, June 7 at 8: Shapiro & Smith and David Dorfman Dance. . . . June 8 at 8: Gina Gibney Dance and Brenda Daniels Dance Company. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through June 19.)





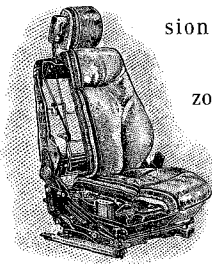
Some people think
a Mercedes S-Class
is nothing more than
a symbol of how
much you're worth.

As beautiful as the Mercedes S-Class on the previous page is, we're even prouder of the other one pictured here. That's because the Mercedes-Benz S-Class, to



say the very least, has more safety systems than any car in its class.*

Take the passenger cabin. Widely considered the essential nucleus of an automobile's safety, this rigid steel reinforced cabin is designed to withstand forces from virtually every direction. In a frontal collision



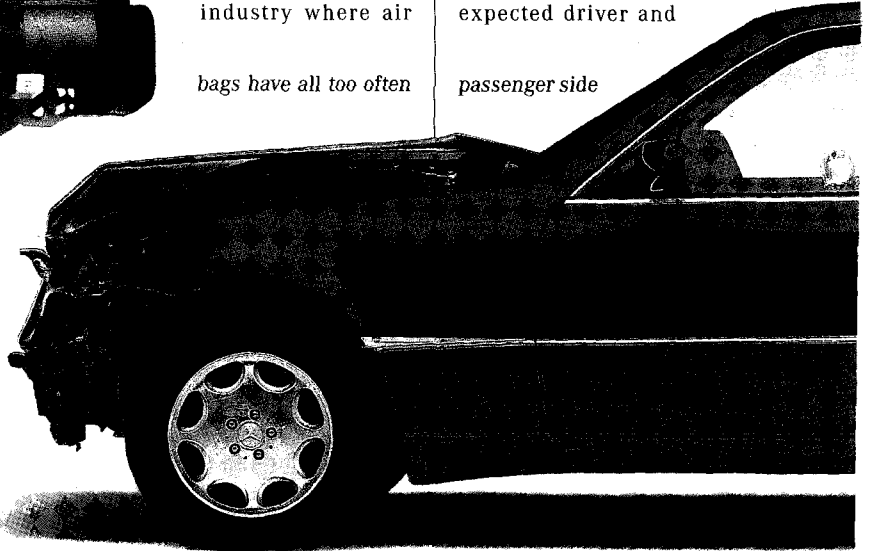
sion for example, crumple zones deform progressively absorbing much of the impact energy. In

the event of a side impact, a steel reinforced floor panel and doors fitted with anti-intrusion bars help protect occupants. And in a rear collision, even the front seats within the cabin of an S-Class are designed to withstand

the force of a 30 mph car-to-car impact.

What's more, in an industry where air bags have all too often

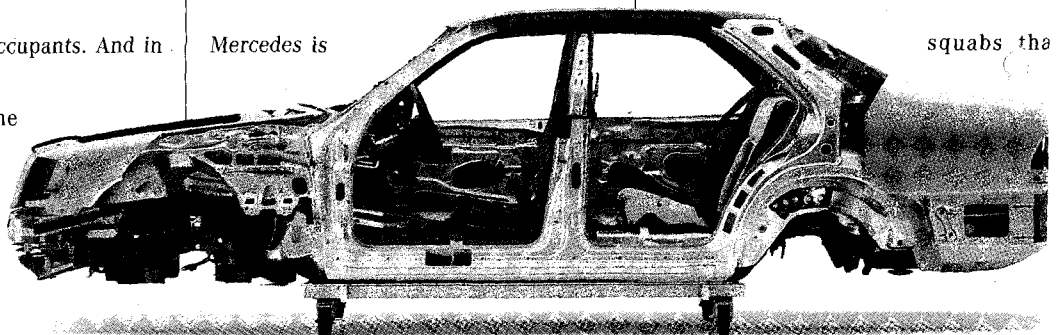
equipped with front Supplemental Restraint Systems that go beyond the expected driver and passenger side



They c be mor

become synonymous with safety, every Mercedes is

air bags. It also includes built-in sea squabs tha

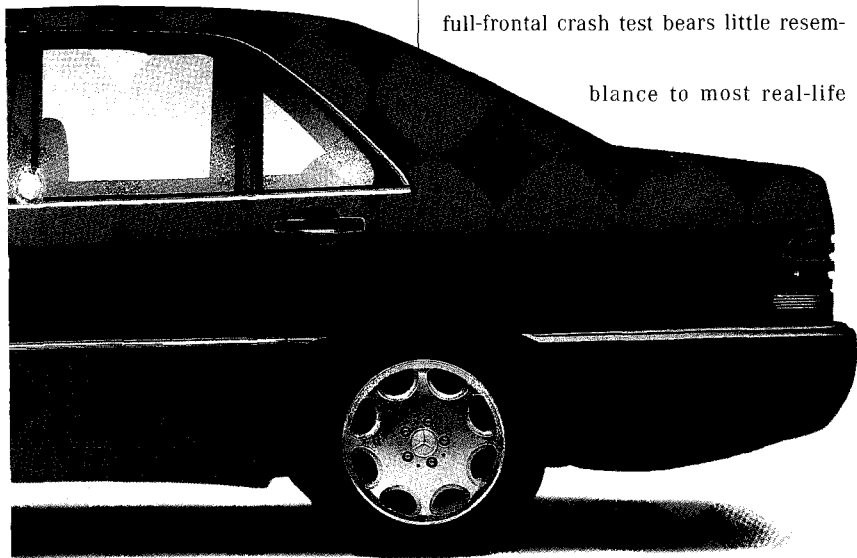


Car depicted on this page is not the same car as on the previous page. Color has been altered. *AMCI review 1993 safety features standard on S-Class versus competitor

elp prevent "submarining" under the seat
elt, padded knee bolsters and Emergency

ciate its safety features. We do it for you.

In fact, because the required 30 mph
full-frontal crash test bears little resem-
blance to most real-life



ouldn't e right.

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remove seat belt slack before the
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Of course it's
assuring to know

u don't have to crash an S-Class to appre-

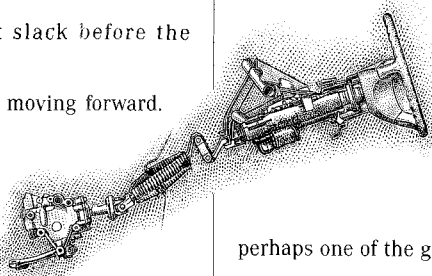
frontal accidents, Mercedes-Benz developed

an additional offset
collision test.

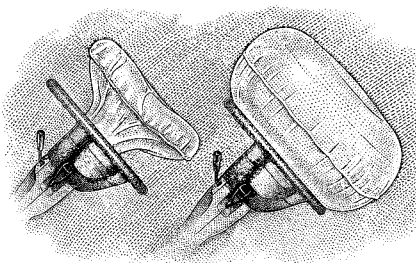
Yet despite all this,

perhaps one of the greatest safety achieve-

ments of the S-Class is its ability to help

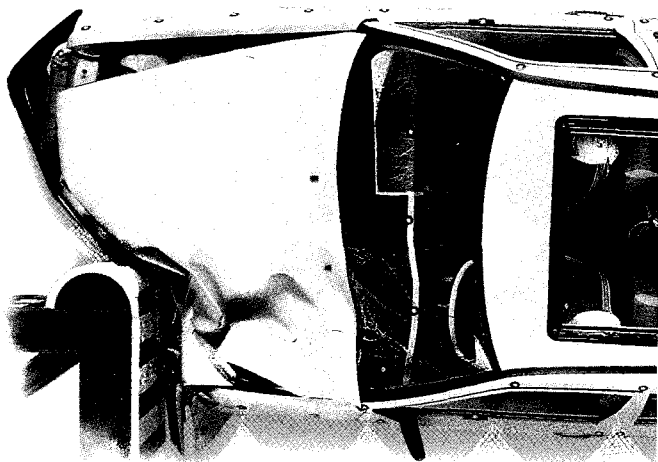


the driver avoid an accident. An indepen-
dent multilink rear suspension, along with



recirculating ball steering and antilock
brakes are only part of a sophisticated
system that together give the driver more
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NIGHT LIFE

SoHo Glow

A FEW days before she kicked off "Country Takes Manhattan" with a sold-out concert at Carnegie Hall, Dolly Parton gave a party for a hundred and fifty or so of her closest friends at the MercBar, on Mercer Street below Houston. Jaded music-business pros call such events "meet-and-greets," and there were plenty of Sony Music executives, journalists, and radio consultants on hand to briefly meet and be greeted by the Tennessee mountain girl, who trolled back and forth through the crowd, trailed by a TV camera crew.

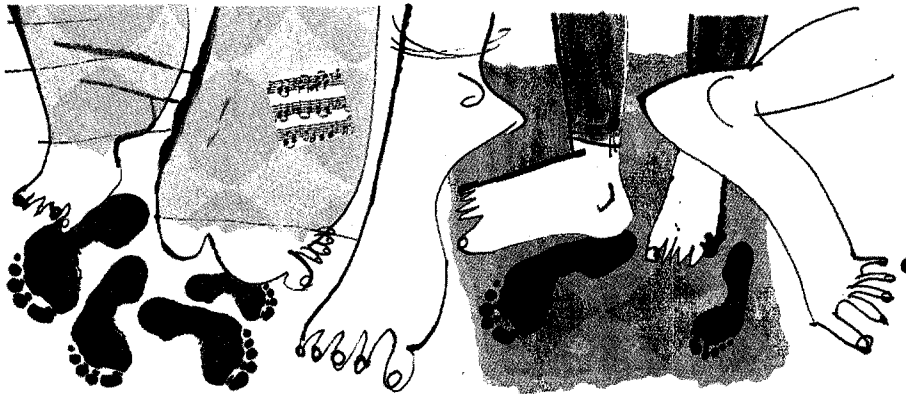
Dolly's people chose well. The MercBar is SoHo's watering hole of the moment, and it is also the early-warning outpost of the Mercer, the neighborhood's first hotel, which will open next door late this year. Campion Platt, one of the hotel's architects and designers, created the MercBar as an amalgam of Adirondack chic, Wild West décor, and "Twin Peaks" luridness. There's plenty of wood paneling, screens made of antlers, and divans upholstered in black-and-white cowhide and old brocade; vintage kayaks and canoes are suspended from the ceiling. At the meet-and-greet, Dolly's pure-white sheath dress, adorned with beads and dripping with fringe, looked like a piece of furniture that had stood up and started walking. When the TV lights caught her, it was blinding. And when Michele Anthony, executive vice-president of Sony Music, held a little ceremony announcing that Dolly's new album, "Slow Dancing with the Moon," had gone platinum, the light from a ceiling spot, filtering down through the bouffant locks of the star's blond wig, painted a strange glow on the perfect landscape of Dolly's face.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—JEFF HARNAR can currently be found in the Oak Room, presenting his new show, "Dancing in the Dark—Vincente Minnelli's Hollywood." Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Some bars cater to a specific clientele, but Arthur's is a free-for-all. It's a small, strange Village bar that looks like a pack rat's attic. In the back is a small, bar-encircled stage, where one can usually find patrons listening to, cheering on, and joining in with the musicians. Sundays belong to Lee Lorenz and his band.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keeffian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure to check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams. The three-woman operation known as **BETTY** will be here for the next two weeks, as part of the Toyota Comedy Festival. Betty's act, a sort of cabaret gone haywire, contains elements of funk music, performance art, satire, and standup comedy, and it all moves along at an amphetamine pace. Most of their material is original, though they also wreak havoc with such songs as "The Look



The Goo Goo Dolls at Irving Plaza.

of Love," "America the Beautiful," and the theme from "Petticoat Junction." Blossom Dearie is here for the early shows on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Once you get past the rough bits here—the hordes of tourists, the cattle-car seating, the stiff prices—you're likely to find yourself face to face with some of the biggest names in jazz and R. & B. The voluptuous **CHAKA KHAN** is here through June 6. Khan isn't always given credit for being one of the most influential singers of her generation. In the seventies, as the lead vocalist for Rufus, her delivery had gospel power, earthiness, and energy. Aretha Franklin had become wistfully soulful, but Khan was gutbucket funky. Unlike her female contemporaries, she refused, in song, to play the victim. This independent streak, coupled with her flamboyant red hair and sensuous features, made her the archetype for the cult of the soul diva. After Khan's groundbreaking "I Feel for You" (the 1984 single was the first to successfully fuse hip-hop and dance music), her albums became flabby and her boredom was obvious. But a sabbatical from pop and some jazz experiments seem to have revitalized her. Khan's latest album, "The Woman I Am," heralded the return of her vocal passion. Live, she's legendarily erratic, but when Chaka is on, she's a force of nature. **JOE WILLIAMS** kicks off on June 8. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. Cyrus Chestnut, Chris Thomas, and Clarence Penn are here through June 5. The **DANILO PEREZ** quartet takes over on June 7. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is currently home to **BOBBY SHORT**. . . . Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia:

new and used bands of every stripe continue to burn brightly here. On June 2, **SOMETHING HAPPENS** will take the stage, and the Virgil Moorefield Ensemble moves in on June 3. Motherhead Bug is in on June 4, H. P. Zinker on June 5, and the **GOD MACHINE** on June 8.

CORNELIA STREET CAFÉ, 29 Cornelia St. (989-9319)—In the basement of this tucked-away Village restaurant-bar is a narrow, white-brick-walled room, decorated with a few tables and steampipes, where you'll find music, poetry readings, and theatre of the cramped. The restaurant itself is a wine-and-candle-light neighborhood café. Downstairs, there's a do-it-yourself sixties-coffeehouse aesthetic

at work. The Andy Biskin quartet is here on June 4.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—A softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. **JOE HENDERSON's** quartet is in through June 6; the **FOUR FRESHMEN** get started on June 8. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Dining.

GRAND, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—The former home of the gone and forgotten Cat Club. The new owners have given the space a much-needed face-

lift—more bars, a paint job, a new stage, and a thumping sound system. Only the velvet rope out front remains. The Pain Teens, Brutal Truth, and the Boredoms are in on June 2; Bebe Buell on June 3; and Shudder to Think and Wider on June 5.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—This two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. The dark, barnlike main room is a fine place to rock out. On June 2, **SUEDE**, the latest Next Big Thing from England, will appear. The band performs shimmering glam-rock that takes a listener back twenty years, to the days of Mott the Hoople, David Bowie's Space Oddity period, and Pink Floyd. (The only post-punk influences on their sound appear to be the Smiths and the Buzzcocks.) This time-travel would be nothing more than a neat trick if the band didn't play with such alluring conviction and mastery, making their debut album, "Suede," an essential 1993 collection. Suddenly, Tammy will open. The Buffalo-based **GOO GOO DOLLS**, who appear on June 3, are a great rock-anthem band, specializing in power chords and stadium-size hooks. Their sound—a blend of punk, metal, and pop—is similar to that of the Replacements, but they're more starry-eyed and youthfully driven. (And the Replacements never made a habit of performing barefoot.) They write earnest, impassioned songs about adolescent turmoil and blue-collar frustration. Here they'll be playing material from their sensational new album, "Superstar Car Wash." The **MUFFS** are also on the bill. For concert information, call 249-8870. . . . The **Swing Dance Society** gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. The **LOREN SCHOENBERG** big band appears on June 6. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld draw-

M. H. JEVES

ings. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Pianist Ronny Whyte and bassist Frank Tate are on hand June 2-5.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—The club most likely to feature an electric-rake player. Run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, the Knitting Factory books all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmosphere is low-key, low-budget bohemian. Maria Excommunicata is here on June 2; Mulumbo on June 3; and **COME** on June 5.

LA CAVE ON FIRST, 1125 First Ave., at 62nd St. (759-4011)—Though situated in the basement of an Upper East Side Mexican restaurant (Pancho Villa), this is an establishment worth checking out. There's nothing trendy, or even distinguishing about it, and that may be the secret of its appeal. The entertainment varies, from tap dancing one night to gospel the next. On Tuesdays, the wonderful blues singer and pianist **BOB GADDY** has the stage.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the square-by-definition Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar.

METROPOLIS, 31 Union Square West, at 16th St.—The basement of this restaurant, a small, tidy, marble-pillared space, is the site of various musical happenings, most notably a club called Giant Step. Every Thursday night, the club's proprietors arrange blind dates between jazz and rap. As d.j.s spin jazz, funk, and hip-hop records, a loose collective of musicians and rappers take turns improvising. You never know who might show up, but Roy Hargrove, Branford Marsalis, and the members of Digable Planets are a few of the artists who have passed through. For schedule information, call 627-8616.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moon dust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a lot. **BILLY STRITCH** is here through June 5; **LAURIE BEECHMAN** gets started on June 8. Closed Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steak house, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples who remember how to dance. Mondays belong to pianist Macy Blackburn, Tuesdays to Sam Ulano and His Swingers, Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and Cathy Chamberlain and the Ace-in-the-Hole band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small red-gold-and-green cabaret, which is currently being pressed into use as a Wednesday-night showcase for faculty and students of the Manhattan School of Music. On June 2, you can catch faculty members working their way through piano quartets by Mozart and Fauré—elegant chamber music for an elegant chamber. Carol Hall and Jason Graae take over the stage on June 7. Dining and, of course, drinking.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatched-roofed bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. **D'INFLUENCE**, a young British soul band, is here on June 2. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz shrine where you have to pass within inches of the stage to reach the rest rooms. The **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet is performing for the next two weeks. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

TAVERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—In the heart of the heart of this legendary indoor-outdoor eatery is one of Manhattan's newer jazz spots, the Chestnut Room. The **KIT MC CLURE** big band is here through June 6.

TIME CAFE, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Hidden within this sleek and trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. Upstairs is a sumptuous Moroccan bar and lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabian-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

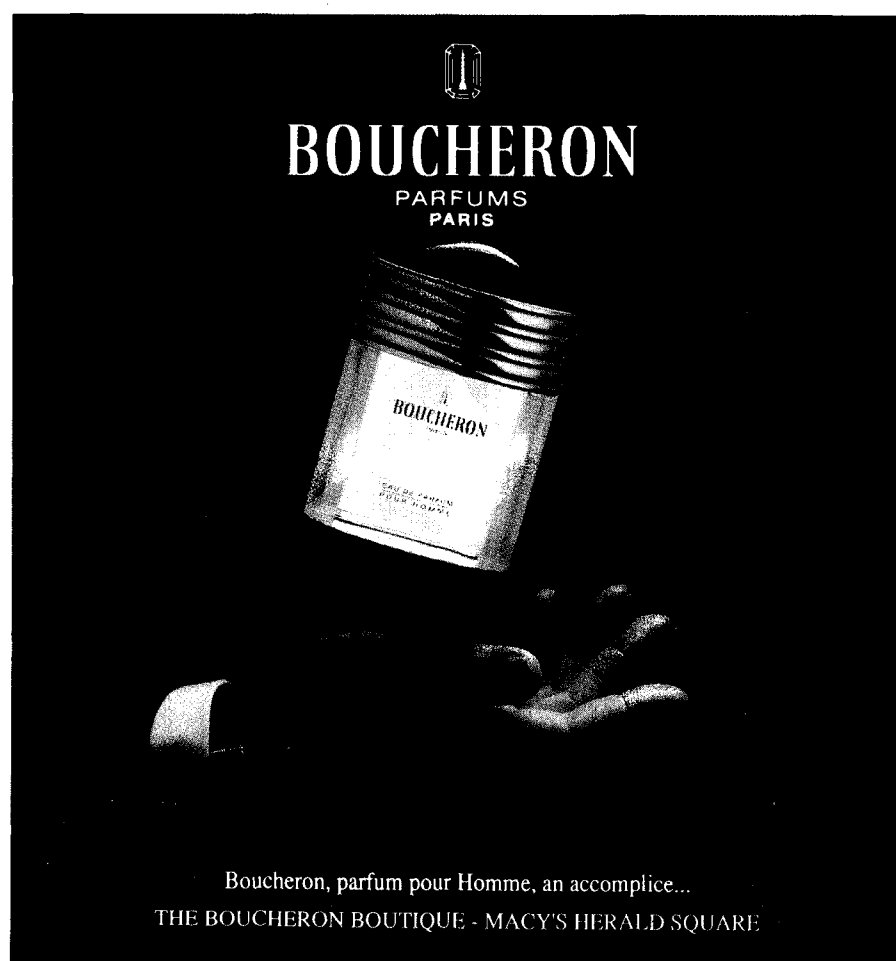
TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muraled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored stamped-tin ceiling, this loft space manages to feel homey. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main orders of business here. Two performers with stage names to go with wild stage personae this week: August Darnell becomes the frontman of **KID CREOLE & THE COCONUTS** on June 4. Darnell plays his wacky R. & B. in zoot suits, and the Coconuts, his three backup singers, double as a retro visual prop for his sly humor. On June 5, Mac Rebennack steps into his "Night Tripper" alter ego, **DR. JOHN** (a name he borrowed from John Creaux, a nineteenth-century voodoo king). The pianist mixes up New Orleans sounds—Cajun, Creole, jazz, funk—in a gumbo that uncannily evokes his great Louisiana compatriot Professor Longhair. The stew is garnished with a pleasant growl of a voice and a gruff charm. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town which still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. The **ROY HAYNES** quartet works out through June 6. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

THE opening of Vingt Deux (22 Seventh Avenue South, at Leroy Street) turns the Crossroads of Tolerance into a truly ecumenical intersection. "A hip hetero bar downtown," exulted a Jackie 60 regular in the first-night crowd. "I was beginning to lose hope. But look—no video. No Knicks game." Of course, threats to good will and harmony will soon come in the form of cars tear-assing down Seventh Avenue and confronting a taxi jam in the right-hand lane. Not that traffic was flowing smoothly inside Vingt Deux. But one hopes that the overtrebled sound and rush-hour-on-the-D-train crush were one-night-only affairs, and that the soothing décor, including cozy banquettes and gentlemen's-club prints, will prevail.

By the official opening, some night hounds had already circled and lifted their legs on specific rooms in this well-appointed stack of Cornell boxes. The ironmongered backgammon boards were thronged by the people who'd commandeered them—evidently in perpetuity—the Friday before. For the moment, however, Vingt Deux does have a doorman who says "Good evening," a staff that says "Sorry!" when one of them steps on your foot, and a bartender who actually says "Thanks" when you tip. Todd, the waiter d'estime at Universal Grill, across the street, said, "It's nice having straight people in the neighborhood—it's so refreshing."



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IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

WHAT lifts the portraits of John Leguizamo above acting exercises and stereotyping is shapely writing and a willingness to let ambivalent feelings simmer. In his first solo evening, the celebrated "Mambo Mouth," the actor-writer—who is half Colombian and half Puerto Rican—served a tapas table of Latino characters, their ambition trained on social power, their idiom spiced with the longings of the marginalized. Leguizamo caught some flak from the tribe for opening the ethnic closet to reveal clown costumes and for gratifying voyeurism by unbuttoning the ethnic fly. But he wasn't looking to be reassuring.

His film career has taken off—he's currently appearing in "Super Mario Bros." Meanwhile, HBO has taped a fluid version of his second Off Broadway show, "Spic-O-Rama," which will air on June 3, 11, and 14. The performer, in a series of dramatic monologues, is again surveying hyphenated existence, this time in a single frazzled family. But although this 'hood has been scouted, Leguizamo has grown bolder. In "Mambo Mouth," one of his characters was a transvestite. Here he goes all the way and plays a woman without winking. Rather than enlist in the ranks of gender-policing machos, Leguizamo goes AWOL in androgyny, diving into the opportunity provided by his compact physique, boxer's grace, and beautiful face. Elsewhere, though, machismo is fondled as much as fought, cocksmanhood portrayed as the only surviving romance in lives bereft of other dreams. Playful and undefensive, his fingers trained on the pulse of humiliation, Leguizamo produces satire that is as pliant as it is raw.

TOYOTA COMEDY FESTIVAL—A ten-day extravaganza (and automotive promotional opportunity) that runs through June 12. Some highlights: June 3 at 6 and 8:30: "Uptown Comedy Jam," with Flex, Corwin Moore, and others. (Uptown Comedy Club, 5 E. 125th St. 242-4884.) ... June 4 at 8: "Many Faces of Comedy," with Bobcat Goldthwait, Chicano Secret Service, Funny Gay Males, and Wendy Liebman. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.) ... At 10: "Funny Poem Slam." (Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St. 505-8183.) ... June 5 at 8: A solo performance by Eric Bogosian. (Alice Tully Hall, 875-5030.) ... Also at 8: "Latino Laffing Matters," including El Barrio U.S.A. (with Angel Salazar) and Chicano Secret Service. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-7710.) ... June 6 at 8:30: A benefit performance, with Whoopi Goldberg (host). (Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030.) ... At 8:30: A solo performance by Denis Leary. (Town Hall.) ... June 7 at 7:30: "Stand Up for New York: Celebrating Fifteen Years of New York Women in Film and Television," with Joy Behar, Mo'Nique, and others. (Town Hall.)

"THE INVISIBLE CIRCUS"—Victoria Chaplin and Jean Baptiste Thiérree, creators of "Le Cirque Imaginaire," return with a new show. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

"JESUS WAS HIS NAME"—A multimedia production about the life of Christ, June 2-13. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777.)

ART

See-Through

RICHARD MARTIN and Harold Koda first teamed up as curators at F.I.T., where they put on unforgettable exhibitions, such as "Fashion & Surrealism," that made the idea of fixed boundaries between fine art and fashion seem academic. Now uptown at the Met's New Costume Institute, Martin and Koda have produced a sensationally good inaugural exhibition, titled "Infra-Apparel" (through August 8), that brings intellectual rigor to the account of how undergarments and boudoir-wear have periodically surfaced in fashion.

Martin and Koda's show offers up, among other things, a brief history of neoclassicism in stylish clothing of the last three centuries, beginning with the diaphanous gowns of the Directoire period and concluding with an inspired trio of contemporary frocks, designed by Martin Margiela, made of found and recycled materials, including remnants and plastic bags, which allude to the chiton, to urban survivalism, and also, perhaps, to the asylum garb in Peter Brook's "Marat/Sade." In their attentions to various manifestations of fashions' follies, fetishisms, and subversions—from the bustle to Jean Paul Gaultier's remarkable costumes for Madonna—Martin and Koda may have also cast the brightest curatorial light to date on the leitmotif of gender and its representation, without for a moment lapsing into righteous and deadened prosaics.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Abstract Expressionism: Works on Paper, Selections from the Collection." This show, which showcases work from 1938 to 1967, seems almost comically tame in light of Abstract Expressionism's initial reputation. Included are de Kooning, Motherwell, Pollock, Rothko, Stamos, Tobey, and many others. ... "Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection." More than four hundred and fifty works—Islamic pottery, Tiffany Favre glass, Manets, Monets, Degas, etc.—from the Havemeyer family's modest agglomeration. Through June 20. ... "The Waking Dream: Photography's First Century" presents rare prints from 1839 to 1939. Through July 4. ... "Drawings from the J. Paul Getty Museum." More than a hundred works by Bronzino, Raphael, Titian, and many others, with special emphasis on the Italian Renaissance. ... "The New Costume Institute's first show, 'Infra-Apparel'." ... "Persian Tiles" presents more than fifty examples from the museum's collection, most of them from the mid-thirteenth century. ... "The Art of Pre-Columbian Gold: The Jan Mitchell Collection." (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century" features work from 1914 to the present. More than ninety artists are represented, including Fernando Botero, Frida Kahlo, and Guillermo Kuitca. ... Dadaist photomontages by John Heartfield and photographs by Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Through July 6. ... Drypoints by Braque and Picasso, Pop art that incorporates commercial signs, and computer-assisted photolithographs are among the more than ninety works in "Reading Prints," an installation tracing the role of language in art. Through July 6. ... "Cinderella," an installation, both whimsical and poignant, of seventeen photographs, in which the characters are William Wegman's sad-faced weimaraners. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)



Self-portrait by Dennis Oppenheim.



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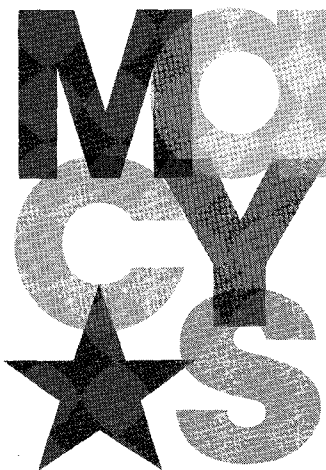


**MEET MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN,
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Macy's salutes the Children's
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"Beat the Odds" honorees,
five local young people
being celebrated for their
achievements after overcoming
daunting obstacles.

Ms. Edelman will sign copies
of her bestselling book,
"The Measure of Our Success:
A Letter to My Children and Yours."



ART—Cont'd

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Picasso and the Age of Iron," an installation of some of this century's most engaging sculpture. The show includes work by Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Julio González, and David Smith. Through June 13. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SoHo, 575 Broadway—Seventy-five paintings, watercolors, drawings, and prints by Paul Klee (1879-1940), dating from 1903 to 1939 and all from the museum's permanent collection. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—After all the pans and the pedantry and pretension, the 1993 Biennial is probably still worth seeing, if only for works by Nan Goldin, Pepón Osorio, Nancy Spero, and other indubitable highlights. Through June 13. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Pieces of String Too Short to Save," an installation by Donald Lipski, made of found objects—gloves, candles, books, etc. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Bears: Imagination and Reality." The only large omnivores that inspire in *Homo sapiens* the simultaneous urge to hug and to flee, bears have fascinated North Americans ever since they (almost) gave up eating us. Black bears and grizzlies will be on dramatic display in twenty-three new dioramas here; visitors can also view a forty-claw necklace and video interviews with people who have survived close encounters with bruins. Starts June 4. . . . "The Hall of Human Biology and Evolution," a new permanent exhibition. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

DIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS, 548 W. 22nd St.—The German artist Katharina Fritsch, who has not previously exhibited in New York, makes her debut with "Rat-King": sixteen ten-foot-tall black rats,

grouped shoulder-to-shoulder and facing outward in a circle, with their tails tangled in a knotted ball. The work is rich with parables of territoriality, of insiders and outsiders. It's very dramatic, but wears thin after a while. Big, vulgar, and aggressive, it's all the things Americans are said to favor. Through June 20. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"A Great Legacy: Morgan Collections, 1913-43" presents J. P. Morgan, Jr.'s acquisitions, including Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts; Gutenberg and Caxton incunabula; autograph letters by Austen, Locke, and Balzac; Rembrandt prints; and much

more. . . . "The Observant Eye" celebrates the sesquicentennial of Henry James's birth with an exhibition of manuscripts, letters, and first editions. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—"The Final Frontier." According to the curatorial thesis here, our concept of the human body is being redefined in light of such technological advances as genetic engineering and virtual reality and such perfect medical monsters as AIDS. There are only a few good works, including Michael Grey's ephemeral

little chips in a Plexiglas box, identified as "solid smoke"; Fred Tomaselli's "painting" made of pills; and Ana Barrado's surreal photograph of families visiting a space park. . . . An installation by Nari Ward of rugs and hangings made of urban waste. . . . Meticulously carved sculptures by Kazumi Tanaka. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Dandies and Decadence: British Writers at the Turn of the Century." . . .

"Femininity, Fashion, and Feminism" is an exploration of coded messages implicit in apparel. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:45.)

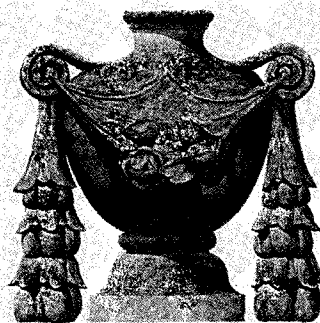
P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City—"War Games,"

a large sculptural installation made from tree trunks, by Polish artist Magdalena Abakanowicz. Through June 20. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

BERND H. DAMS AND ANDREW ZEGA—The second floor of Stubbs' books-and-prints shop has been turned over to a showing of exquisite little watercolors of eighteenth-century English garden urns, most of which still stand at their original sites, in public gardens or great country houses. The works represent a collaborative effort by Dams, a German architect, who did the legwork and the drawings, and Zega,



. . . watercolors at Stubbs.

an American illustrator, who brought them to life in watercolor. On close examination they can be seen to reflect—magically, since each stands in isolation on a white ground—various atmospheres: twilight, strong summer sun, and, most of all, those foggy days so typical of England. Through June 14. (Stubbs, 153 E. 70th St.)

BRICE MARDEN—A large show of new paintings, drawings and etchings, many of which feature the artist's exploration of his wavering, unerring line. Through June 26. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

DENNIS OPPENHEIM—This isn't one of Oppenheim's most energetic shows, but it includes several entertainingly edgy ruminations on aggression. A sculptural work consists of, among other elements, a small bull with milking tubes attached; the tubes

are pumping steam which powers one of the bull's front legs and makes it paw the floor. Images of shattered identity come in the form of three large, headless concrete torsos, with eyes, noses, lips, and ears scattered about the floor. The show's most incisive piece is a pack of wild horses with knives for shoes, slicing their way through a loaf of rye bread as they gallop across the gallery's parquet plains. Through June 12. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER—Nearly two hundred etchings from 1952 to 1992, including portraits of jazz musicians, self-portraits, landscapes, and depictions of animals. Through June 23. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

JOEL SHAPIRO—New sculptures executed with terrific abandon. Shapiro has managed at once to galvanize all the elements in his repertoire while moving headlong onto new turf. This is one part of a two-gallery exhibition in conjunction with Pace Downtown. Through June 18. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St. and 142 Green St.)

EDWARD SOREL—A retrospective of cartoons, caricatures, illustrations, and magazine covers—including some of his recent work for this magazine—from the last twenty-five years. Through June 24. (Society of Illustrators, 128 E. 63rd St.)

O SOUL, COME BACK! THE WORLD OF THE HAN DYNASTY TOMB—This exhibit ingeniously arranges grave-site artifacts to reproduce the experience of entering a tomb and progressing from outer to inner burial chambers. It's a surprisingly cheerful show. Often, in earlier Chinese dynasties, soldiers, slaves, and horses were beheaded and buried alive with their dead masters, to provide military protection in the afterlife, but by the Han (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) substitutes in ceramic, including figures of entertainers and models of snacks with stoves to cook them on, were supplied, perhaps to give the soul a good time. Later, when married couples were entombed together as society became less stratified, graves became cozier (most of the forty objects on view are from the tombs of low-level bureaucrats; the later relics were mass-produced). The human and animal figures are paradoxically vital: a guard dog's upper muzzle slopes upward like a pagoda roof, a dancer's outthrust hip describes a dramatic, sexy S-curve, storytellers distort their faces and limbs expressively, and a grinning horse swells its chest proudly, bursting with life. Through June 5. (Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, Amsterdam Ave., at 119th St.)

SHORT LIST—**MAGDALENA ABAKANOWICZ**: Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Through June 5. (Open Mondays). . . **GIFFORD BEAL**: Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 18. . . **ELIZABETH BUTTERWORTH**: Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Through June 12. . . **ALEXANDER CALDER**: O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 5. . . **CHARLES HOWARD**: Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. Through June 18. . . **DAVID LIGARE**: Stiebel Modern, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 5. . . **SEYMOUR LIPTON**: Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 25. . . **DAN MC CLEARY**: Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 12. . . **SANTE MONACHESI**: Marisa Del Re, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 8. . . **ALFONSO OSSORIO**: Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 26. . . **ARNALDO ROCHE**: Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 12. . . **BURTON SILVERMAN**: Keiffer, 28 E. 72nd St. Through June 5. . . **RICHARD SMITH**: Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. Through June 25. . . **XUL SOLAR**: Adler, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 30. . . **JOYCE TREIMAN**: Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 28. . . **JOHN H. TWACHTMAN**: Spanierman, 50 E. 78th St. Through July 2. . . **NOT VITAL**: Baron-Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 30.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

SIAH ARMAJANI—New works by an Iranian-born, Minneapolis-based artist who is a leader in the field of public art and who is fascinated

by the American regionalist spirit of the twenties and thirties. These sculptural assemblages—both wall works and tabletop pieces—are more syncopated and down-home than his past work. They consist of paths of coal, rows of milk cans and wheelbarrows, windows with lace curtains, lots of railroad track, haystacks, barn siding, and collages featuring quotations from Wallace Stevens and William Carlos Williams. They are tough works, dark in many ways, but also dreamy and evocative of boys' life. The tabletop pieces are maquettes for public works. Through July 30. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

MARK DI SUVERO—"Aurora" is a massive steel sculpture comprising circles and lines, spheres and angles—a freestanding work on a megascale. Through June 12. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

WALT KELLY (1913-73)—Original artwork from Kelly's swamp comic strip, "Pogo." Through June 30. (F.D.R., 670 Broadway.)

GUILLERMO KUITCA—Crisply delineated map paintings, and paintings depicting floor plans for apartments, by a remarkable young Argentine artist. Through June 12. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

RICHARD PRINCE—The artist has remade his earlier rephotographed photographs of biker chicks. They are Prince's attempt to locate a female equivalent of his famed appropriation of the Marlboro Men, yet unlike the Men, whose mythic embodiment of the American cowboy is a case of literal iconography, the chicks send mixed signals: they are sex objects, posed (by whom, one wonders—the bikers or themselves) to be used, but they are also proud and defiant. Through June 12. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

HAIM STEINBACH—After several fitful years, this artist seems finally to be onto something here. He has displayed cabinets and chests of drawers made of wood, Formica, or mirror, each with something filed away in it: a shiny pair of scissors, large dog bones, arrangements of rocks, and embroidered hankies. Steinbach successfully explored issues of consumerism earlier in his career; these new works sardonically tap into the secondary status the market accords sculpture by making something shoppers understand—furniture—and hiding the dust collectors inside. Through June 26. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

"COMING TO POWER"—Many first-wave feminist artists of the early seventies made sexually explicit art as a means of empowerment. Several landmark examples are on view here, most notably Lynda Benglis's daring double-headed dildos cast in polished silver, and Nancy Spero's joyous paintings of women dancing with phalluses. Nancy Grossman's fiercely fetishistic leather heads seem motivated by existential issues rather than sexual ones. The exhibition also features the work of a new generation of artists, including G. B. Jones, Zoe Leonard, and Nicole Eisenman. A number of these recent works feature lesbian themes, which are several steps behind male homoerotic art in gaining mainstream exposure. The real accomplishment of this show is that it brings together two generations of women who have a lot in common but don't seem to know one another. Through June 12. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St.)

SHORT LIST—**NICOLAS AFRICANO**: Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. Through June 19. . . **JOHN BEERMAN**: Beitzel, 102 Prince St. Through June 5. . . **ELIZABETH CATLETT**: Kelly, 591 Broadway. Through June 8. . . **MICHAEL GOLDBERG**: Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway. Through June 26. . . **Y. Z. KAMI**: Toll, 146 Greene St. Through June 12. . . **VINCENT LONGO**: Condeso-Lawler, 524 Broadway. Through June 5. . . **WILL MENTOR**: Rubenstein-Diacono, 130 Prince St. Through June 25. . . **REE MORTON**: Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. Through June 5. . . **FRANK OWEN**: Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through July 10. . . **RICHARD PETTIBONE**: Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through June 5. . . **ALAN SHIELDS**: Cooper, 155 Wooster St. Through June 16.

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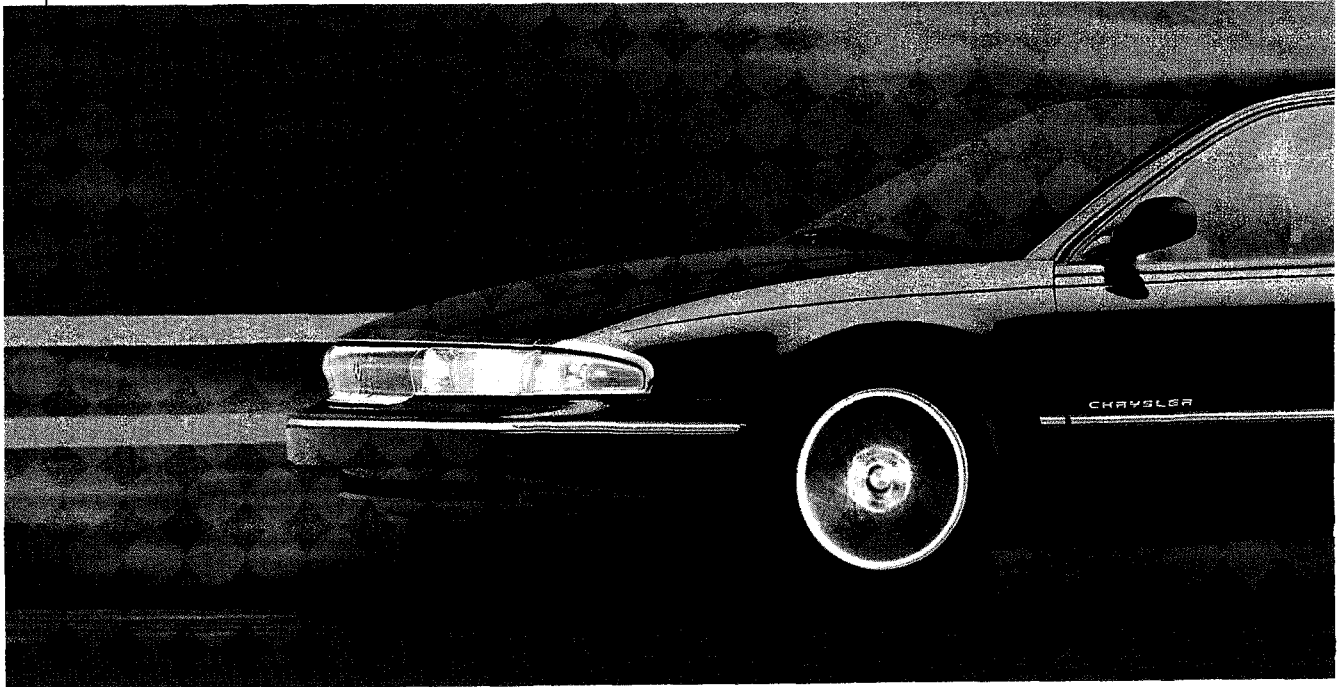
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For Chrysler, the only thing floating at last year's North American International Auto Show was a rumor. Word was that the New Yorker, then just a "concept" car, would soon become a reality. A rumor that Chrysler is happy to confirm. Introducing the very



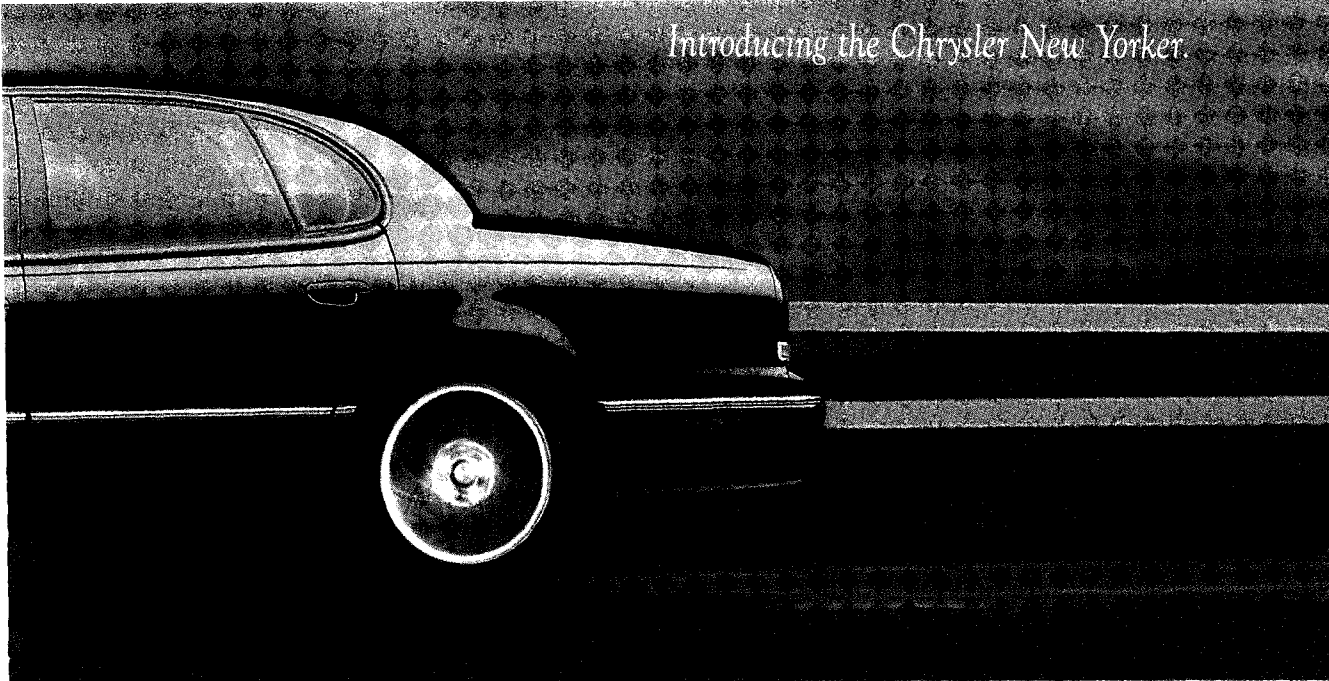
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antithesis of Detroit—the totally new Chrysler New Yorker. We started with our award-winning "cab forward" design, which maximizes interior room while giving the car a wide track for precise handling. Then we added four-wheel independent suspension, and an engine with more horsepower than a BMW 535i. The result? A six-passenger car

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PHOTOGRAPHY

American Harvest

AFTER what we witnessed in the last decade, it's difficult to contemplate federal involvement in the arts without shuddering. But the current show at Howard Greenberg (120 Wooster Street; through June 19), featuring photographs that were commissioned by the Farm Security Administration in the thirties and forties, proves that government can be an inspiring patron. The exhibition includes the work of eight F.S.A. photographers who were asked to take pictures of farmers, migrant workers, and people in small towns, in the hope of persuading Congress to allocate funds for improving rural life. Several of these photographers became major figures—they included Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Ben Shahn—but they all did rich and resonant work. This was a moment in American photography that seems never to dry up.

All kinds of scenes can be observed in this exhibition: people working or reading or just hanging out. In a number of shots, kids in the background are peering through screens or windows, and these pictures are obviously meant to pull at one's heart. But there's also an example of an altogether different kind of peering. In a 1939 classroom shot by Russell Lee, a little girl has twisted her body around so she can see what the older boy behind her is writing in his notebook. This is no sneak peek, and her lack of coyness is a riot.

ROBERT FRANK—Photographs chronicling Frank's distinctive take on America in the fifties. Through June 26. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE (1946-89)—Black-and-white Polaroids taken between 1971 and 1975. Through June 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

"MALCOLM X, A PHOTO HISTORY"—More than ninety images, including work by Bob Adelman, Eve Arnold, and Robert Haggins, Malcolm's personal photographer, all taken between 1959 and 1965. Through June 27. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—**JESSIE TARBOX BEALS**: Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. Through June 19. . . . **WILLIAM CLIFT**: Equitable Gallery, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. Through June 12. . . . **ARTHUR ELGORT**: Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. Through July 3. . . . **NAN GOLDIN** and **JOSEF KOUDELKA**: Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 12. . . . **CHRISTOPHER JAMES**: Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through July 22. . . . **DAVID LEVINTHAL** and **EDWARD CURTIS**: Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Through June 30. . . . **RICHARD MISRACH**: Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through June 5. . . . **ANDREA MODICA**: Saul, 560 Broadway. Through July 2. . . . **DOROTHY NORMAN**: International Center of Photography. Through June 27. . . . **ONOFRIO PACCIONE**: Stendal, 622 Broadway. Through June 20.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art.)

MUSIC

Voice of the Century

ON the morning of June 7, Carnegie Hall will be filled for a service in memory of Marian Anderson, as it was so often filled when she sang there a generation and more ago (though most of her great New York recitals were in Town Hall, so sadly underused today). How distant now seems the American era of which she was an emblem and yet how near, when we realize she was so recently living. Many years before the civil-rights movement found a young Montgomery pastor named King, Anderson's noble voice taught the world the musical heritage of slavery. Can the young people who rejoice in today's overflowing of black American culture even imagine the atmosphere in which this singer's invitation to the Metropolitan Opera—far too late, and for no more than token appearances—provoked resignations from the board in protest? Do they know the bitter fate of her equally gifted but differently constituted contemporary Paul Robeson?

Anderson's death will probably prompt some tributes that were already overdue: a comprehensive republication of her recordings (good anthologies are available on the RCA Victor vocal series and from Pearl Records, but there is much more) and a full-scale biography. It's probably too much to hope that a voice like hers will be heard again soon; such a thing happens "once in a hundred years," said Arturo Toscanini. So it's fitting to honor the magnificence of her voice and her spirit, and the quality of inspiration they provided, just as history will honor her achievements.

OPERA

NETHERLANDS OPERA COMPANY—In its North American premiere engagement, the company will present Monteverdi's penultimate opera, "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria," in a production by Pierre Audi, conducted by Glen Wilson (leading a period-instrument ensemble). The cast includes tenor Anthony Rolfe Johnson, mezzo-soprano Graciela Araya, and countertenor Michael Chance. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. June 5 and June 8-10 at 8, and June 6 at 3.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—James DePreist conducts Barber's Essay No. 2, Victor Herbert's Cello Concerto No. 2 (featuring the orchestra's principal cellist, Lorne Munroe), and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique." (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. June 3-5 at 8, and June 8 at 7:30.)

CONCORDIA—Conductor Marin Alsop has carved out a niche for herself through her special affinity for American orchestral masterpieces (particularly those of Copland, Bernstein, and Barber) and works that delineate a rapprochement between classical and jazz styles. She has no shortage of opportunities to explore these repertoires, since she serves as musical director or principal conductor to no fewer than five organizations of note: the Colorado Symphony, the Eugene Symphony, the Long Island Philharmonic, the Cabrillo Festival, and the Concordia chamber orchestra, which she founded in 1983. In this benefit concert, she and the Concordians will take a tour through the catalogue of Samuel Barber, touching down on works from the nineteen-thirties and forties: his Over-



Marin Alsop, conductor of Concordia, at Alice Tully Hall.

ture to "The School for Scandal," Symphony No. 1, "Adagio for Strings," and Violin Concerto (featuring Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg). (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. June 4 at 8.)

NEW AMSTERDAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—Glen Cortese conducts Copland's "Appalachian Spring" Suite, Respighi's "The Pines of Rome," and the New York premiere of William Thomas McKinley's "Miniature Portraits" (featuring trumpeter Jeffrey Silberschlag and bassoonist Deborah Greitzer). (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. June 4 at 8.)

CAPPella ORATORIANA—Dennis Delaney directs the choir and period-instrument ensemble in spiritual madrigals by Luca Marenzio and Mario Savioni, sacred dialogues by Virgilio Mazzocchi and Agostino Agazzari, and two oratorios by Giacomo Carissimi (his brief "Historia di Job" and his much acclaimed "Historia di Jephthe"). (Oratory Church of St. Boniface, Willoughby and Duffield Sts., Brooklyn. 1-718 875-2096. June 5 at 8.)

ACAFIST—A men's chamber choir from Moscow, directed by Andrei Malutin. (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall St. 602-0873. June 6 at 4.)

NEW YORK VIRTUOSO SINGERS AND CANTICUM NOVUM—Harold Rosenbaum brings together two of the choirs he directs for a performance of Stravinsky's Mass and Schoenberg's

AMY ARBUS

"Friede auf Erden," in addition to motets by Brahms and by Renaissance masters. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. June 6 at 8.)

CENTRAL CITY CHORUS—Charles Pilling directs an all-Handel program comprising two of the "Chandos" Anthems, the psalm "Laudate, pueri, Dominum," and the Oboe Concerto No. 2 (featuring Sarah Davol); with several soloists and a period-instrument orchestra. (Central Presbyterian Church, Park Ave. at 64th St. 838-0808. June 7 at 8.)

"A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC"—A wide-ranging benefit concert that will include appearances by Skitch Henderson and the New York Pops, the Boys Choir of Harlem, Judy Collins, Marvin Hamlisch, Maureen McGovern, Robert Merrill, Eugenia Zukerman, and two-thirds of Peter, Paul & Mary (the Peter and Paul portions). (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 8 at 8.)

RECITALS

LUNCHTIME IN THE PARK—An especially festive installment of Bryant Park's lunchtime all-fresco concert series, featuring pianists Ilana Vered and Ore Carmi, violinist Pauline Kim, and the Essex String Quartet. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. June 2 at 12:30. Raindate, June 4 at 12:30. No tickets necessary.)

MORDECAI SHEHORI—The pianist will perform works by Handel, Mendelssohn, Beethoven (his D-Minor Sonata, Op. 31, No. 2), Chopin, and Liszt, in a recital of music that was associated with the late Vladimir Horowitz. The concert will include a couple of rarities: an unusually hard-to-find Liszt transcription of Schubert's song "Der Atlas," and Horowitz's own Etude-Fantasy in E-Flat Major ("Les Vagues," Op. 4), written in 1917 and apparently never before performed in public. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 2 at 8.)

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET—Performing Schumann's A-Major Quartet. (St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway at Fulton St. June 3 at noon. Admission by contribution.)

BARGEMUSIC—June 3 at 6:30: A benefit bash beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, with Mendelssohn's Octet as the centerpiece. . . . June 6 at 4: Chamber music for strings, by Mozart, Schnittke, and Dohnányi. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061.)

JOSEPH KUBERA—The pianist, who is drawn particularly to the music of our time, offers works by Cage, David First, Gerhard Rühm, Tomasz Sikorski, and Michael Kowalski (the premiere of his "Piano Lesson, After Chopin"). (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. June 4 at 7:30.)

"MUSIC FOR HOMEMADE INSTRUMENTS"—Or, at least, for instruments that have been altered with things you might find in your kitchen, such as Skip La Plante's "prepared bassoon," a standard instrument enhanced with plastic buckets and bits of paper and aluminum foil. Most of the other featured instruments have been constructed entirely of such household items as funnels, soda straws, cardboard boxes, bicycle horns, tin cans, pots and pans, table legs, and flashlights. It's all in the service of the Muse, of course—in this case, for compositions by John Bertles, Jody Kruskal, Rolf Groesbeck, David Simons, and Mr. La Plante. (Homemades Loft, 262 Bowery, between Houston and Prince Sts. June 4 and June 6 at 8, and June 5 at 2 and at 8. Admission by a modest fee, payable in either cash or recyclable cans.)

TEATIME IN THE SALON—Chamber music for piano and winds by Mozart, Rossini, and Glinka. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. June 6 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

QUINTET OF THE AMERICAS—Performing jazz-tinged chamber works for winds, by Astor Piazzolla, Hanz Mielenz, Manuel Enriquez, Roberto Sierra, and Gershwin. (Americas Society, 680 Park Ave. at 68th St. June 8 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

NORTH/SOUTH CONSONANCE—Presenting music by contemporary American, Canadian, Venezuelan, and Argentine composers. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. June 8 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

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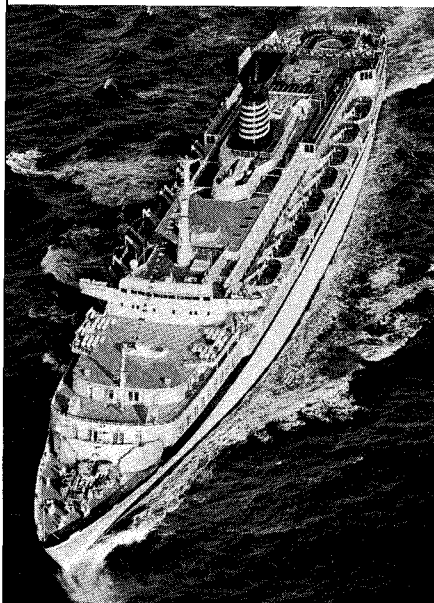


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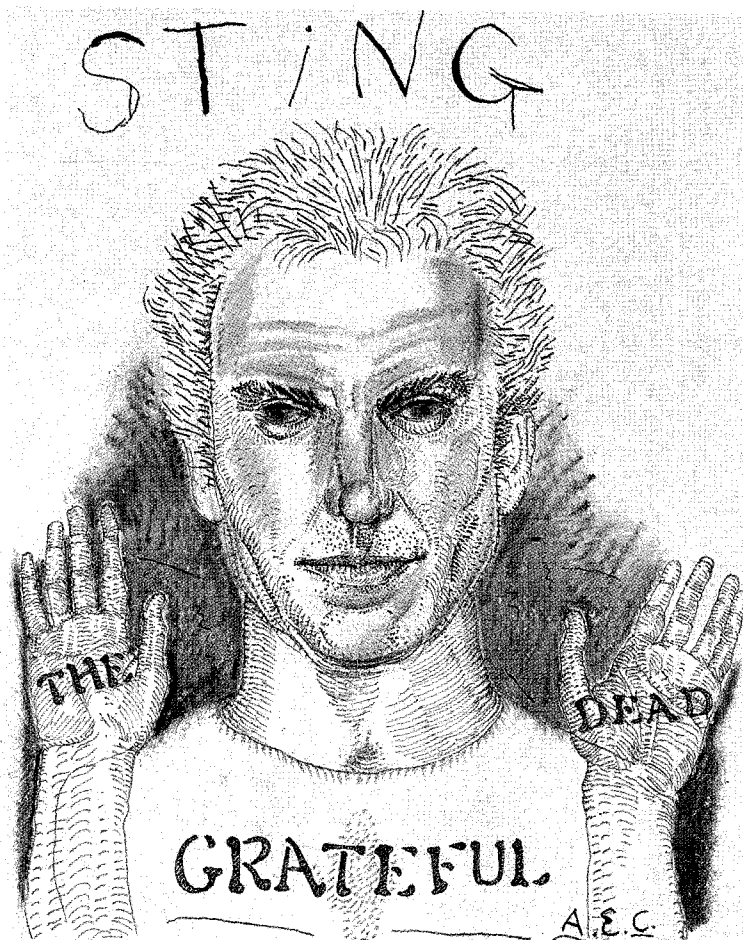
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JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

DANIEL LANOIS—This Canadian expatriate has spent the past decade producing records for some of the best rock and folk artists on the planet, including U2, Peter Gabriel, Robbie Robertson, and Bob Dylan. But he's not just a knob-twirler, and his solo albums (1989's "Acadie" and the brand-new "For the Beauty of Wynona") shouldn't be dismissed as the self-indulgent exercises of a pop-industry prince. "Wynona," in particular, shows just how much U2 and Gabriel owe to Lanois's musicianship and his ear for beautifully eccentric grooves. His driving pop seems thoughtful and meditative, his slower numbers are filled with a fascinating tension, and he's a master at mixing French-Canadian, Celtic, and Afro-Caribbean elements in a modern context. This is not a show for U2 fanatics only. Kristin Hersh opens. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824, June 3 at 8.)

JELLYFISH—A shamelessly retro band of cartoon hippies and early-seventies rock revivalists who are trying hard to be taken seriously as pop craftsmen. The San Francisco band's new record, "Spilt Milk," sounds nearly as inventive as those of their many models, from the Beatles and Brian Wilson to Supertramp and bubblegum 45s, but the cumulative effect remains underwhelming. Still, their shows are bright and funny, and one hopes that they can build enough momentum to escape the staleness that eventually besets all retro marketing strategies. (Academy, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171, June 4 at 8.)

STING—One hesitates to encourage a rock star who adorns his arrangements with cocktail-jazz affectation, has himself photographed on a white horse casting a hand toward the heavens, and appears wielding a sword in his latest video. But then again, we expect

this from Sting—he's the most tendentious pop icon since William F. Buckley, Jr. So we forgive him. After all, the Police made great pop, and they are sorely missed. And we can always hope that the singer will someday rise above his own ego. Meanwhile, "Ten Summoner's Tales," Sting's latest solo effort, turns out to be a finely crafted project, which includes at least two gems: "Fields of Gold" and "It's Probably Me." Opening for the waspish one is **DADA**, a guitar-based rock trio that doesn't sound anything like the Police. Dada's first album, "Puzzle," contains echoes of Dire Straits, Steely Dan, and Lou Reed, and the band mixes sincere songs with wildly funny and cynical ditties like "Dizz Knee Land" and "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow," which evoke the spirit of the Cramps and Frank Zappa without veering all the way out of the mainstream. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6741, June 8-9 at 8.) ...

¶ With the **GRATEFUL DEAD**. This gig has to be the oddest mismatch since Ren and Stimpy—a double bill in the anything-goes style of the old Fillmore East. The Dead were effortlessly jumbling rock and jazz long before Sting ever bleached his hair. Maybe he'll take the stage at some point during the Dead's set and jam—though the thought of Sting singing "Truckin'" is just a little too surreal. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. 1-201 935-3900, June 5-6 at 6.)

GEORGE WINSTON—Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. June 2 at 7:30.

CHARLES AZNAVOUR and LIZA MINNELLI—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 2-4 at 8 and June 5 at 3 and 8.

TOWER OF POWER—Town Hall. June 5 at 8.

YANNI—Backed by a fifty-piece orchestra. (Gershwin Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100, June 8 at 8. Through June 13.)

ALAN E. COBER

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

YANKEES—Vs. the Cleveland Indians, June 2 at 7:30.

METS—Vs. the Chicago Cubs, June 7-8 at 7:40.

CHAMPIONSHIPS—BASKETBALL

KNICKS—Depending on the outcome of the two games in Chicago, the Knicks will either be celebrating a conference championship or banking on extending their home-court winning streak against the Bulls. If necessary, Games Five and Seven will be played in New York on June 2 at 9 and June 6 at 7. (The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000; the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and the Knicks at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000.)

RACING

THE BELMONT STAKES—Yet another year without a Triple Crown winner. Prairie Bayou and Sea Hero try for best two of three on June 5. Post time is 5:40.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

It's COMING UP...—Some twenty-seven hundred plants will be in bloom for the Rose Celebration at the New York Botanical Garden on June 5-13, from 11 to 5. Visitors can follow rose experts on tours, peruse rose-related crafts, or simply inhale the perfumed air. (Bronx Park. Admission by contribution.)

REVOLT REVISITED—On the fourth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, a dramatic reading of the play "A Small Delegation," by Janet Neipris, about an American professor on a lecture junket in China, in 1989. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. June 4 at 6:30.)

READINGS—June 3 at 8: Brad Gooch will read from his biography of the poet Frank O'Hara. (A Different Light, 548 Hudson St. No tickets necessary.)... June 5 at 2:30: Poets Stanley Kunitz and Sandra McPherson will read from their own work, in a program titled "Place as Theme in Poetry: Hothouses and Gardens." (Alfred T. White Memorial, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. No tickets necessary.)... June 6 at 4: Thomas Lux and Elizabeth Macklin will be reading from their own poetry. (Alliance Stage, 197 East Broadway, at Jefferson St. No tickets necessary.)... June 7 at 7:30: Chilean writer Isabel Allende will read from her most recent novel, "The Infinite Plan." (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.)... June 8 at 6:30: Actors Laura Esterman and Paul Hecht, among others, will read from Hemingway's "A Moveable Feast." (Battery Park City's Hudson River Park. Tuesday nights through July 6. For directions, call 864-1414. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS—June 2 at 6: David Henry Hwang, Tony Kushner, Eduardo Machado, Wendy Wasserstein, and others will serve on a panel discussing theatre today, to benefit the Young Playwrights program. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. For more information, call 307-1140.)... June 8 at 8:15: Scott Turow will discuss his most recent novel, "Pleading Guilty," with journalist Paul Gray. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

WALKS AND TOURS—June 3 at 5:30 A.M.: A sunrise tour of the Brooklyn Bridge and the Fulton Fish Market. To register, call 669-9416.... June 6 at 1: Radical Walking Tours will focus on demonstrations held at City Hall and the history of the subway. For more information, call 1-718 492-0069.... June 6 at 1: A tour of Riverbank State Park, at 145th St. and Riverside Drive, will be led by its designer, Richard Dattner. For more information, call 996-1100.

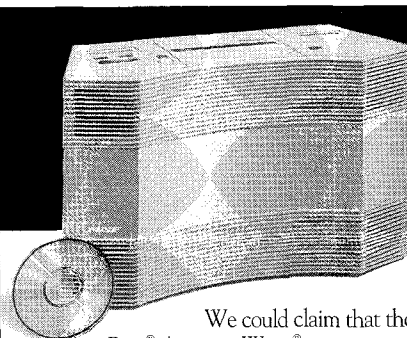
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EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
 Theatre 1: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Sofie" (directed by Liv Ullmann; in Danish), with Erland Josephson.
 Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Like Water for Chocolate" (†).
 Theatre 6: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).

LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

Through June 3: (Separate admissions) "The Shining" (1980, Stanley Kubrick), with Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Danny Lloyd, and Scatman Crothers; and "My Private War" (1990, Harriet Eder and Thomas Kufus; in German), a documentary.

From June 4: "Heimat II: Chronicle of a Generation: Episode 1" (Edgar Reitz, in German).

NEWMAN THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

June 2: "The Searchers" (1956, John Ford), with John Wayne, Ward Bond, Vera Miles, Natalie Wood, and Jeffrey Hunter.

June 3: Theatre closed.

From June 4: "Days of Heaven" (1978, Terrence Malick), with Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, and Robert Wilke.

MOVELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Dave" (†).

Theatre 2: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).

Theatre 3: "Dave" (†).

VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

Theatre 1: "Sliver" (†).

Theatre 2: "Cliffhanger."

Theatre 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†).

Theatre 4: "Menace II Society" (†).

Theatre 5: "Sliver" (†).

Theatre 6: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.

Theatre 7: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through June 3: "Delivered Vacant" (Nora Jacobson), a documentary; and "Something Within Me" (Jerret Engle and Emma Joan Morris), a documentary.

From June 4: The Fifth Annual New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival starts its two-week run.

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

Theatre 1: "Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson, and James Wilby.

Theatre 2: "American Heart" (Martin Bell), with Jeff Bridges and Edward Furlong.

Theatre 3: Through June 3: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn. From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.

Theatre 4: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo.

Theatre 5: Through June 3: "Claire of the Moon" (Nicole Conn). From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.

Theatre 6: "Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary.

Theatre 7: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).

19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.

Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

Theatre 3: "Menace II Society" (†).

Theatre 4: "Indecent Proposal" (†).

Theatre 5: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo.

Theatre 6: Through June 3: "Lost in Yonkers" (†). From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN THE MOVIE HOUSES

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6	7	8	2	3	4	5

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER
ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF,"
STARTING ON PAGE 31.



Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson in "Guilty as Sin."

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "Posse" (†).

Theatre 2: "Menace II Society" (†).
 Theatre 3: Through June 3: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo. From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.

Theatre 4: Through June 3: "Lost in Yonkers" (†). From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.

34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.

Theatre 2: "Sliver" (†).

Theatre 3: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).

EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Like Water for Chocolate" (†).

SUTTON I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo.

Theatre 2: Through June 3: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo. From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"Scent of a Woman" (Martin Brest), with Al Pacino and Chris O'Donnell.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).

Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson, and James Wilby.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (†).

Theatre 2: "Lost in Yonkers" (†).

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: Through June 3: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn. From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.

Theatre 2: "American Heart" (Martin Bell), with Jeff Bridges and Edward Furlong.

Theatre 3: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).

FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)

Theatre 1: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).

Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).

Theatre 3: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).

Theatre 4: (Matinées only) "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film; and (evenings only) "The Night We Never Met" (Warren Leight), with Matthew Broderick, Annabella Sciorra, and Kevin Anderson.

Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).

Theatre 6: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.

Theatre 2: "Cliffhanger."

BECKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.

NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Sliver" (†).

Theatre 2: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Menace II Society" (†).

TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Dave" (†).

EAST 85TH STREET, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Indecent Proposal" (†).

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (†).

Theatre 2: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).

ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)

Theatre 1: "Posse" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sliver" (†).

Theatre 3: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.

Theatre 4: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.

Theatre 5: "Dave" (†).

Theatre 6: "Cliffhanger."

Theatre 7: Through June 3: "Sliver" (†). From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Menace II Society" (†).

Theatre 2: Through June 3: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo. From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: "Children of Fate" (directed by Andrew Young and Susan Todd; in English and Italian), a documentary.

Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.

Theatre 3: "The Long Day Closes" (Terence Davies).

WAVERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (†).

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).

Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography" (†).

Theatre 2: "Olivier Olivier" (Agnieszka Holland; in French).



That little map wasn't
worth two dead flies.

You said turn left.

Right like turn right
or right like not wrong?

Right.

You know what I mean.
See ya at the clubhouse.



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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 3: "For a Lost Soldier" (Roeland Kerbosch, in Dutch).
 Theatre 4: "Okoge" (Takehiro Nakajima, in Japanese).
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
 Theatre 1: "Sliver" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Dave" (†).
 Theatre 4: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Sliver" (†).
 Theatre 6: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
 Theatre 7: "Cliffhanger."
 Theatre 8: Through June 3: "Dave" (†). From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.
 Theatre 9: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).
23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
 Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.
 Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (Neil Jordan), with Stephen Rea.
 Theatre 3: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
 Through June 3: "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film.
 From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
 Theatre 1: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn.
 Theatre 2: "Howards End" (James Ivory), with Anthony Hopkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson, and James Wilby.
 Theatre 3: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.
 Theatre 4: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).
 Theatre 6: "Léolo" (Jean-Claude Lauzon, in French).
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
 "Lost in Yonkers" (†).
FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
 "Indecent Proposal" (†).
57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
 "American Heart" (Martin Bell), with Jeff Bridges and Edward Furlong.
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
 Theatre 1: "Like Water for Chocolate" (†).
 Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (Neil Jordan), with Stephen Rea.
ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
 "Sofie" (Liv Ullmann; in Danish), with Erland Josephson.
FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
 Through June 3: "The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Jane March and Tony Leung.
 From June 4: "The Music of Chance" (†).
CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
 "Strictly Ballroom" (†).
COLUMBUS CIRCLE, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
 Through June 3: "Dave" (†).
 From June 4: "Guilty as Sin" (Sidney Lumet), with Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson.
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
 "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
 Theatre 1: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Indochine" (Régis Wargnier, in French), with Catherine Deneuve.
 Theatre 3: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
 Theatre 4: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (Zhang Yimou; in Mandarin).
 Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
 Theatre 6: Through June 3: "Stolen Children" ("Il Ladro di Bambini"; Gianni Amelio, in Italian). From June 4: "Un Coeur en Hiver" (†).
REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
 "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
 Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (†).

Theatre 2: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
 Theatre 3: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo.
 Theatre 4: "Sliver" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.
 Theatre 6: Through June 3: "Sliver" (†). From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.
METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
 Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.
 Theatre 2: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).
OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
 Theatre 1: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
 Theatre 1: "Made in America" (directed by Richard Benjamin), with Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson.
 Theatre 2: "Made in America."
 Theatre 3: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
 Theatre 4: "Cliffhanger."
 Theatre 5: "Posse" (†).
 Theatre 6: "Cliffhanger."
 Theatre 7: "Posse" (†).
EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
 "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo.
EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
 Theatre 1: Through June 3: "Menace II Society" (†). From June 4: "Life with Mikey" (James Lapine), with Michael J. Fox.
 Theatre 2: "Menace II Society" (†).
 Theatre 3: Through June 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†). From June 4: "Menace II Society" (†).
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
 "Sliver" (†).
NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
 Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
 Through June 3: "Welcome Danger" (1929), with Harold Lloyd; and three Lloyd short films.
 From June 4: "Anna Christie" (1930), directed by Jacques Feyder; in German, with Greta Garbo.
GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
 Through June 3: "Secret People" (1951, Thorold Dickinson), with Valentina Cortese, Serge Reggiani, and Audrey Hepburn; and "The Unforgiven" (1960, John Huston), with Burt Lancaster, Hepburn, Audie Murphy, Charles Bickford, and Lillian Gish.
 June 4-5: "How to Steal a Million" (William Wyler), with Audrey Hepburn, Peter O'Toole, Hugh Griffith, and Charles Boyer; and "Green Mansions" (1959, Mel Ferrer), with Hepburn, Anthony Perkins, and Lee J. Cobb.
 June 6-8: "Wait Until Dark" (†); and "Paris When It Sizzles" (1965, Richard Quine), with Audrey Hepburn, William Holden, Noël Coward, and Marlene Dietrich.
THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
 June 2: "After the Thin Man" (1936, W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy, William Powell, James Stewart, and Elissa Landi; and "The Thin Man" (1934, Van Dyke), with Loy and Powell.
 June 3: "Madame Rosa" (1978, Moshe Mizrahi; in French), with Simone Signoret; and "The Confession" (1970, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Yves Montand and Signoret.
 June 4-5: "The Bicycle Thief" (1949, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian); and "Miracle in Milan" (1951, De Sica; in Italian), with Francesco Golissano, Brunella Bovo, Paolo Stoppa, and Emma Gramatica.
 June 6: "Persona" (1967, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Bibi Andersson and Liv Ullmann; and "The Seventh Seal" (1956, Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow, Gunnar Björnstrand, Andersson, and Nils Poppe.

June 7: "Luna" (†); and "The Conformist" (1970, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda.
 June 8: "Body Heat" (1981, Lawrence Kasdan), with William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, Richard Crenna, Mickey Rourke, and Ted Danson; and "The Accidental Tourist" (1988, Kasdan), with Hurt, Turner, Geena Davis, Amy Wright, Ed Begley, Jr., David Ogden Stiers, Bill Pullman, and Robert Gorman.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—June 3 at 2:30: "A Foolish Love" (1981, directed by Giorgos Panoussopoulos; in Greek). . . . June 3 at 3 and 6: "The Double Burden: Three Generations of Working Mothers" (1992, Marlene Booth), a documentary. . . . June 4 at 2:30: "Love Wanders in the Night" (1981, Frieda Liappa; in Greek). . . . June 4 at 3 and 6: "Le Mystère Picasso" (†). . . . June 4 at 6 and June 8 at 2:30: "Iphigenia" (†). . . . June 5 at 2: "The Woman Who Dreamed" (1988, Nikos Panayotopoulos; in Greek). . . . June 5 at 2:30 and June 8 at 3: "The Sorrow and the Pity" (†). . . . June 5 at 5: "The Photograph" (1986, Nico Papatakis; in Greek). . . . June 6 at 2: A program of short French films. . . . June 6 at 3 and 5: "Grin Without a Cat, Parts 1 and 2" (1977, Chris Marker; in French). . . . June 6 at 5: "Voyage to Cythera" (1984, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek). . . . June 7 at 2:30: "Fear" (1966, Costas Manoussakis; in Greek). . . . June 7 at 3: "But What Do Women Want?" (1979, Coline Serreau; in French). . . . June 7 at 6: "Balamos" (1982, Stavros Tornos; in Greek). . . . June 8 at 6: "The Tree We Hurt" (1986, Dimos Avdeliodis; in Greek).
WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—June 2 at 2 and June 3 at 2 and 6:45: "New York, New York" (1977, Martin Scorsese), with Liza Minnelli and Robert De Niro. . . . June 3 at 5 and 9:45: "The Man I Love" (1947, Raoul Walsh), with Ida Lupino, Bruce Bennett, and Robert Alda. . . . June 4 at 2 and 6:45 and June 5 at 3:30 and 8:45: "The Last Waltz" (1978, Scorsese), with The Band. . . . June 4 at 4:15 and 9 and June 5 at 5:45: "Tales of Hoffmann" (1951, Michael Powell), with Moira Shearer, Léonide Massine, Robert Helpmann, and Ludmilla Tcherina. . . . June 5-6 at 2: "Beauty and the Beast" (1946, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair. . . . June 6 at 3:30 and 9:15, June 7 at 5:15, and June 8 at 2 and 7:45: "Raging Bull" (1980, Scorsese), with De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci. . . . June 6 at 6, June 7 at 2 and 7:45, and June 8 at 4:30: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1961, Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Alain Delon.
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"What Made Pistachio Nuts? Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Tradition." June 5 at 2: "Side Show" (1932, Roy Del Ruth), with Winnie Lightner and Charles Butterworth. . . . June 5 at 4: "Gold Dust Gertie" (1931), with Lightner, Chic Johnson, and Ote Olsen. . . . June 6 at 2: "So Long Letty" (1930), with Charlotte Greenwood. . . . June 6 at 4: "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath" (1931, Edgar Sedgwick), with Buster Keaton and Greenwood.
FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—June 2 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Italian Straw Hat" (†).
WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Films in the 1993 Biennial Exhibition. June 3-6: "Some Divine Wind" (1991, Roddy Bogawa). Showings Wednesdays and Fridays at 3, Thursdays at 3 and 6:15, Saturdays and Sundays at 1 and 3:30.
JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-0824)—June 4 at 7:30: "The Bad Sleep Well" (1960, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshirō Mifune. . . . June 5 at 1 and 3: "Congratulatory Speech" (1985, Tomio Kuriyama; in Japanese).
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—June 5 at 3 and 7: "Darling" (†).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Double Trouble

THE 1945 British anthology film "Dead of Night"—the epitome of civilized horror movies—unspools at the Cinema Village on June 4 in an unexpected context: the Fifth Annual New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. The festival press release states that in one of the film's five episodes "Michael Redgrave stars as a ventriloquist whose dummy, Hugo, falls for a rival male ventriloquist." This is a fanciful reading of a scenario that's about schizophrenia, not homosexual envy. Redgrave's ventriloquist is a tormented loner: long ago, he bequeathed any show-biz brashness he might have possessed to Hugo. The dummy, who derides his boss mercilessly, wants a life of his own; he sees the "rival male ventriloquist," a crude, good-natured Yank, not as a new mate but as a possible means of escape.

The two-in-one lead character inspires Redgrave to give his most original and exciting screen performance. The ventriloquist's face becomes the canvas for the duelling impulses of his "dual personality"—at the end it turns into a terrifying expressionist self-portrait. Of course, the story could be construed as a veiled gay parable, but it would be a mistake to view it as high camp. Will the audience chuckle when Redgrave goes into a jealous fit or when a shrink talks of Hugo as the "dominant" half of his personality? Seen without preconceptions, Redgrave's tour de force defies categorization. It goes beyond sexual and psychological definitions—it's an act of fierce, transcendent imagination.

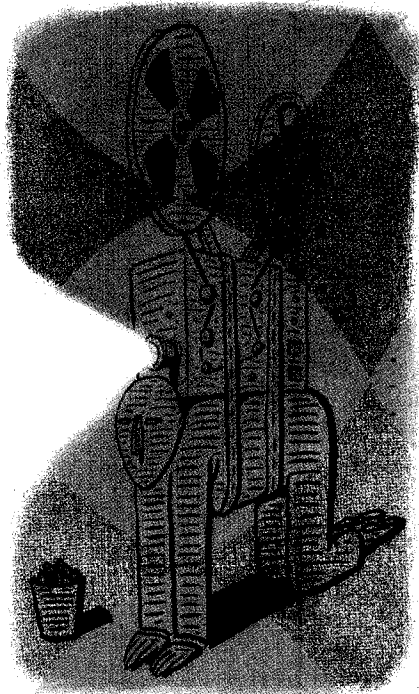
(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

UN COEUR EN HIVER—With Daniel Auteuil, Emmanuelle Béart, and André Dussollier; Claude Sautet. In French. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; starting June 4.)

DARLING (1965)—The darling, played by Julie Christie, drifts upward. She casually models, has a bit part in a movie, leaves a husband, deceives a lover, goes to new ones; after such tribulations as an abortion, an orgy, and a religious conversion, she winds up unhappily married to a prince. We know what we're *supposed* to think: that this girl has no direction in life. We are prodded to see that this bitch is a child of our times. But is this mod British movie any different from, or more profound than, the "insider story" magazines and columns that also show how dirty the lives of celebrities *really* are? The film's chief distinction is Julie Christie; she's extraordinary—petulant, sullen, and very beautiful. With Laurence Harvey and Dirk Bogarde. Directed by John Schlesinger.—P.K. (Metropolitan Museum of Art; June 5.)

DAVE—Dave Kovic (Kevin Kline), the hero of Ivan Reitman's populist comedy, is a regular middle-class guy who happens to be a dead ringer for the President of the United States (also Kline). The screenplay, by Gary Ross, contrives to put Dave in the Oval Office, where he poses as the President and allows himself (initially) to be manipulated by the crafty White House chief of

staff (Frank Langella). By the end of the picture, he has restored honesty and decency to the government, and has fallen in love with the First Lady (Sigourney Weaver). In the first half hour or so, the movie is hilarious, because its humor is mostly destructive; and Kline's performance as the real President is a chillingly funny portrait of Chief Executive as empty suit. But after the promisingly nasty beginning, the filmmakers settle into a sort of campaign mode, lulling and flattering the audience with a fairy-tale vision of the common man's victory over the Washington establishment. The movie's crowd-pleasing agenda inexorably saps its energy. Reitman and Ross are willing to sacrifice bite for across-the-board appeal, and they wind up with a political comedy that has no politics. Also with Charles Grodin, Ben Kingsley, and Kevin Dunn.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/17/93.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Tower East, Orpheum VII, and Chelsea Cinemas. . . .) ¶ Columbus Circle; through June 3.)



DRAGON: THE BRUCE LEE STORY—Bruce Lee, a kung-fu master and star of the 1973 martial-arts extravaganza "Enter the Dragon," had the sort of physical skills that even the most gifted mimic couldn't do justice to. In Rob Cohen's biographical film, Jason Scott Lee (no relation) plays Bruce, and he does well enough in the picture's many spectacular fight scenes, yet the violent production numbers don't quite capture the excitement—the aesthetic thrill—of a performance by the real Bruce Lee. Even more damagingly, the movie doesn't answer, or even formulate, the most interesting questions about its subject's odd life and unlikely career. The filmmakers are evasive about the circumstances of Lee's sudden death, in 1973, at the age of thirty-two; and they never try to explain why this phenomenally talented artist chose to express himself through *combat*. They present Bruce, for the most part, as a sweet, even-tempered young man—just another optimistic kid chasing a dream of success. This is a speedy and fairly absorbing picture, but we're always aware that something is missing. Also with Lauren Holly, Michael Learned, Robert Wagner, and John Cheung (who staged the fight scenes). The screenplay, by Cohen, Edward Khmara, and John Raffo, is based on a

memoir by Lee's widow.—T.R. (5/17/93) (Bay Cinema, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

HOT SHOTS! PART DEUX—Over the final credits, a voice announces that this burlesque of Rambo was "filmed in Hollywood before a live studio audience." A so-so joke, but a fecund idea. When it comes to features, the "Hot Shots!" team of director/writer Jim Abrahams and co-writer/executive producer Pat Proft can't go the distance (even for under ninety minutes). But sending up movie fads on a cable-TV comedy show (like a resuscitated "Not Necessarily the News"), they might emerge as brilliant wisecracks—especially if they picked targets more timely than Rambo. Though good sport Charlie Sheen is all pumped up to play top-gun-turned-commando Topper Harley, and Valeria Golino has developed a fetching deadpan as his true love, Ramada, the funniest bits are isolated spoofs of recent clichés, like a "Basic Instinct" bedroom scene—silly stuff that's cable-ready.—M.S. (Movieland 8th St. Triplex, 34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

INDECENT PROPOSAL—A humorless, muddled slog through familiar territory. David and Diana Murphy (Woody Harrelson and Demi Moore) are a young married couple, desperate for money, who vainly try their luck at the tables of Las Vegas. Billionaire John Gage (Robert Redford) is so smitten by Diana that he offers her a million dollars for one night of love. That's the dilemma, but it never grips you; the director, Adrian Lyne, is bored by anything that smacks of moral complication, preferring to show us what a juicy, unflustered life you can enjoy with that kind of cash.—A.L. (4/26/93) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, First & 62nd Cinemas, East 85th Street, Festival, and Olympia. . . .) ¶ Embassy; through June 3.)

IPHIGENIA (1977)—There's fervor and dedication in Michael Cacoyannis's version of Euripides' "Iphigenia in Aulis"; what's missing is the excitement of a new interpretation. And was there a little too much Arthur Miller in Euripides? (The arguments have an ideological ring.) But Costa Kazakos's robust, irresolute Agamemnon is very fine, and if Irene Papas's performance as Clytemnestra is overscaled, her Clytemnestra certainly makes you believe in the vengeance she will take on Agamemnon. The role suffers from a topical flaw; Clytemnestra's female rage sounds too much like what we heard in the seventies. She has become a precursor, and less of a character. There's also a problem of style: the film is all rocks and scrub brush and Clytemnestra swelling with wrath and Menelaus (Costa Carras) expostulating. Performed this way, "Iphigenia" is like a wildlife film about rhinoceroses—everybody's snorting at each other. With Tatiana Papamoskou as the young heroine. In Greek.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 4 and 8.)

THE ITALIAN STRAW HAT (1927)—René Clair took the Eugène Labiche and Marc Michel play that Bergson used to illustrate his theory of comedy and turned it into a model of visual wit. This silent satire on middle-class pretension is so expertly timed and so elegantly directed that farce becomes ballet. With Albert Préjean as the bridegroom. Designed by Lazare Meerson.—P.K. (Florence Gould Hall; June 2.)

LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE—Alfonso Arau's sticky, lusty, and rather ludicrous movie is set on a Mexican ranch in 1910. The head of the family is the the unyielding Mama Elena (Regina Torne), who determines the destinies of her three daughters. The youngest, Tita (Lumi Cavazos), must stay at home and

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

never marry. Needless to say, she promptly falls in love. It's the old story, passions trying to burst through the shell of repression, and it infects the rest of the film: well-behaved wedding guests suddenly grow weepy or horny, and the old social order is menaced by bands of roaming revolutionaries. But what should be a struggle turns into a giggle; Arau's style loses its balance, swooning into endless closeups of damp brows and heaving bosoms. Scripted by Laura Esquivel from her own novel. In Spanish.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

LOST IN YONKERS—Virtue more or less triumphs while comedy and drama go down for the count in this mildly expanded screen version of Neil Simon's Pulitzer Prize-winning period piece, directed by Martha Coolidge and adapted by Simon. Mercedes Ruehl and Irene Worth re-create their stage roles as the loving, childlike thirty-six-year-old, Bella, and her stern, emotionally clamped mother—who's also the stern, emotionally clamped grandma of fifteen-year-old Jay (Brad Stoll) and twelve-year-old Arty (Mike Bamus). In 1942, they come to stay with her and Bella above the family candy store in Yonkers, while their father journeys South to sell scrap metal. The characters in this "serious" Simon effort are just as one-dimensional as they are in his farces: he sets up Bella and Grandma as archetypes of the holy fool and the harsh parent, and uses them to teach the boys about the power of positive feeling and the need to face the truth. Not even Ruehl and Worth can make the result more than situation dramedy. Richard Dreyfuss co-stars, gratingly, as the boys' gangster uncle.—M.S. (Baronet, Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Ziegfeld, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . 19th Street East 6, and Murray Hill Cinemas; through June 3.)

LUNA (1979)—Jill Clayburgh is an opera singer and Matthew Barry is the heroin-addicted adolescent son she had with her Italian first love. For two hours and twenty-four minutes, they try to come to grips with their feelings; they even act out their incestuous impulses. As usual, the director, Bernardo Bertolucci, chooses highly charged and "personal" material, but here he fails to illuminate it or give it palpability and pull. He intersperses awkward improvisations with overworked visual motifs and thudding symbolic acts—at one point, Barry literally walks in his father's shoes.—M.S. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 7.)

MAP OF THE HUMAN HEART—A private epic from the New Zealand director Vincent Ward, who made "The Navigator." The new film moves across continents, languages, and elements—from icepacks to hellfire and back again. Avik is an Inuit, taken from the Arctic in 1930 by an R.A.F. mapmaker named Walter Russell (Patrick Bergin) and flown to Montreal to be treated for tuberculosis. Here he meets the young Albertine, and from then on the story charts his obsessive love for her, which reaches an unlikely climax on top of a wartime barrage balloon. That image, dreamy yet sharp, and so extravagant you almost want to laugh, is typical of Ward's work. Unfortunately, the need to compress thirty years of action tends to smother the actors; Jason Scott Lee and Anne Parillaud look dull and soporific in the leading roles, and even Patrick Bergin cannot do much with the blurred part of Russell. Still, the film is worth staying with for the bombing scenes, when Avik (now in the R.A.F. himself) witnesses the obliteration of a German city; few directors have such an unblinking eye for horror.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

MENACE II SOCIETY—This inner-city crime melodrama, set in Watts, is a speedy, violent, adolescent-cynical take on the no-hope lives of young black men. The filmmakers—twenty-one-year-old twins Allen and Albert Hughes—

aren't interested in the tragic irony of the classic gangster film; they aim, instead, for the throwaway, life-is-cheap tone of grimy fifties B-pictures. They move from horror to horror in a businesslike, deadpan way that reflects, with frightening conviction, the thoroughness of their characters' alienation. The Hugheses are so scrupulous, so comprehensive, in their refusal to do the usual things that they leave themselves short on expressive options. As the picture goes along, you actually start to wish it were a little squarer, that the filmmakers would give you something more to hold on to than the grinding pulp momentum that substitutes here for true dramatic structure. The Hugheses achieve some brilliant and memorable sequences, and the lack of sentimentality is a step in the right direction, but the movie winds up running in place. With Tyrin Turner, Larenz Tate, Jada Pinkett, Vonte Sweet, Glenn Plummer, Bill Duke, Charles S. Dutton, and Samuel L. Jackson. Screenplay by Tyger Williams; cinematography by Lisa Rinzler.—T.R. (5/31/93) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, 86th Street East, and Embassy.)

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING—On the sunny side of the Bard, Kenneth Branagh leads us through the tiffs and deceptions of Shakespeare's comedy, all shot in and around a Tuscan villa. Branagh does not pay much heed to the virtues of restraint. This is confirmed by most of the performances—Branagh and Emma Thompson as Benedick and Beatrice, splashing out with grand comic gestures, and a mangy Dogberry from an unintelligible Michael Keaton. The movie's jollity feels forced—it's more of a guided tour than a relaxed show of wit. What potency there is comes from the characters who refuse to be gripped by good cheer—Don John, played by Keanu Reeves as a pinup with malice, and Don Pedro, played by Denzel Washington, whose cool gravity shames the rest of the movie.—A.L. (5/10/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

THE MUSIC OF CHANCE—With James Spader and Mandy Patinkin, directed by Philip Haas. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Fine Arts; starting June 4.)

LE MYSTÈRE PICASSO (1956)—Picasso and Henri-Georges Clouzot ("The Wages of Fear," "Diabolique") collaborate. The result is one of the most joyful of all records of an artist at work. (It was a disastrous failure, though, when it opened in a few American theatres.) Picasso has a volatile, explosive presence. He seems to take art back to an earlier function, before the centuries of museums and masterpieces; he is the artist as clown, as conjurer, as master fun-maker. For most of the film the screen is his paper or canvas, and in seventy-five minutes he draws or paints fifteen pictures. When he complains to Clouzot that the canvas is too small, the screen expands to CinemaScope size. Some sequences use time-lapse photography to compress the working time on a canvas to a few minutes: the changes and developments (when, for example, a goat's head becomes a skull and then a head again) suggest what animation might be but isn't. In one sequence he does a really bum picture and you watch to see what he can possibly do to salvage it; he reworks it, making it more and more complicated, and it gets worse and worse. Finally he gives up in disgust and scribbles over it, and you feel relieved that he didn't like it any better than you did. Cinematography by Claude Renoir; score by Georges Auric. (Don't be put off by the fatuous narrator who tells us that we will see what is in the mind of a genius at work, and exclaims, "We would give much to know what was in Joyce's mind while he was writing 'Ulysses'!")—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 4.)

POSSE—This revisionist Western is multicultural to the max; also bloated, muddled, and anachronistic. The only reason to root for the (mostly) black heroes is that they stand up for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans against white predators. Their leader, Jessie Lee (Mario Van Peebles), fights in a black Army unit in the Spanish-American War until a cruel, capricious white officer (Billy Zane) pushes him to the breaking point. He escapes



At Film Forum 2, a Greta Garbo retrospective.

from Cuba to New Orleans with a chest of gold and some b-a-a-a-d lieutenants; then they head West. After forty minutes of seemingly random shooting and riding and glaring, it turns out that he intends to wreak havoc on the enemies of a utopian all-black frontier town named Freemanville. This chaotic pastiche climaxes with a mammoth showdown punctuated by cries of "No justice, no peace!" and "Can't we all get along?" (The title, too, is anachronistic: it refers not to sheriff's deputies but to the gang solidarity of the valiant black outlaws.) Zane and Richard Jordan (as a villainous Anglo lawman) swallow the scenery without even chewing it properly; Stephen Baldwin gives the liveliest performance as the sole white person in the posse (which also includes Tone Loc, Big Daddy Kane, Charles Lane, and Tiny Lister, Jr.). As director and star, Van Peebles contracts a bad case of pulp megalomania—he assumes epic postures as he photographs himself against the sky. With Blair Underwood as the two-faced sheriff of Freemanville; script by Sy Richardson and Dario Scardapane.—M.S. (19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

SILVER—Sharon Stone goes cold in this botched thriller—maybe from the effort of pretending that her character, a beautiful book editor, would fall for the preening young computer wizard played by the vacant-and-proud-of-it William Baldwin. The producer, Robert Evans, hired Philip Noyce to direct and Joe Eszterhas to adapt Ira Levin's best-seller; if Evans had assigned the whole thing to Brian De Palma, they both might have scored comebacks. It should have been a breeze to make an entertaining suspense film out of Levin's perverse page-turner about electronic voyeurism in a chic Manhattan high rise. But the movie has been fatally Eszterhased. The wicked lure of audiovisual bugging and the snatches of "Rear Window," "Peeping Tom," and Levin's own "Rosemary's Baby" recede before a single reductive question: whether it's Baldwin who is killing off the tenants in the high rise, or the only other suspect—a police-procedural novelist (Tom Berenger) who spouts defenses of sexy, violent pulp that sound like the screenwriter's own apologia. Eszterhas has one wad—the "did he/she or didn't he/she?" plot—and he shot it in "Jagged Edge" and "Basic Instinct." All that makes the movie watchable is Vilmos Zsigmond's sensual cinematography; all that makes it listenable is Howard Shore's inventive score, with eerie vocals echoing the flat black-and-white images on the voyeur's video monitors.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

THE SORROW AND THE PITY (1970)—Magnificent documentary epic on the German Occupation of France. Directed by Marcel Ophüls, this study in the psychology of history makes us ask what we and our friends and families would actually have done if our country had been invaded, like France. It's both oral history and essay: people who lived through the German Occupation tell us what they did during that catastrophic period, and we see and hear evidence that corroborates or corrects or sometimes flatly contradicts them. What makes the film innovative is the immediate annotation of what has just been said. As the perspectives ramify, we begin to get a fuller sense of what it was like to participate in the moral dream of an occupied nation than we have ever had. (Four and a half hours.)—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; June 5 and 8.)

STRICTLY BALLROOM—Baz Luhrmann's first film brings good news: Australian cinema is on the move again, with a vigor not seen since the days of "Mad Max." There's no violence in "Strictly Ballroom"—the general lack of unpleasantness, in fact, is quite unnerving—but the speed of it still leaves you reeling. A young dancer, played by Paul Mercurio, acquires a new partner (Tara Morice), dreams up a flash routine, and sets out to break the Old Guard. The plot is cut-rate melodrama, and Luhrmann knows it; but he never sneers at his hero's

ambitions. Besides, there are so many other things to laugh at—the costumes, the minor characters with their major obsessions, the psychedelic makeup, the trashy music. The movie is over before you know it, and is not one to linger in the mind, or indeed pass through the mind at all; but it's a good-humored ride for the senses, never too sickly, and who can say no to that?—A.L. (2/15/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Cinema 3.)

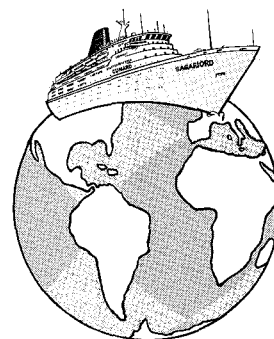
VISIONS OF LIGHT: THE ART OF CINEMATOGRAPHY—This documentary, directed by Arnold Glassman, Todd McCarthy, and Stuart Samuels, is much more fun than its college-catalogue title suggests. The movie is cheery, convivial, and swift: for ninety minutes, stunning images, drawn from all eras of movie history, pass before us, and we listen to a couple of dozen veteran cinematographers speaking about what they do. The craftsmen are a likable and unpretentious bunch, and it's easy to share their delight in the achievements of their colleagues and masters: the film is a joy to look at. (The clips are taken from the best possible prints, and they're all shown in their original aspect ratios.) Movie-lovers can argue with some of the filmmakers' choices—the near total exclusion of images from Westerns is the most serious flaw—but, in a strange way, that's part of the picture's charm. It has the power to revive senses that have been dulled by the crushing predictability of recent movies. The cinematographers interviewed include Allen Daviau, Caleb Deschanel, Haskell Wexler, John Bailey, and the late Nestor Almendros (to whom the film is dedicated).—T.R. (4/5/93) (Quad Cinema.)

WAIT UNTIL DARK (1967)—Directed by Terence Young and adapted by Robert and Jane-Howard Carrington from Frederick Knott's Broadway hit, this one-set suspense film has a strong opening and closing and a sagging midsection. Happily, it also has Audrey Hepburn as the heroine, a blind woman in a New York basement apartment, and Alan Arkin as the villain, who enlists Jack Weston and Richard Crenna to ferret out and remove a heroin-filled doll they think is stashed in Hepburn's place. Hepburn summons up reedy resiliency and humor—she rises above the rigged pathos, whether she's responding to the tough-love approach to blindness adopted by her husband (Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.) or to the idiotic show the bad guys put on to win her trust. Arkin's performance is all gimmicks, mostly good ones: with bangs, sideburns, a leather jacket, and an adenoidal, "intellectual" delivery, he's an evil suburbanite in beatnik's clothing.—M.S. (Gramercy; June 6-8.)

WIDE SARGASSO SEA—John Duigan's adaptation of Jean Rhys's strange and memorable 1966 novel is set in the West Indies of the mid-nineteenth century, and an air of thick tropical sensuality pervades the movie's imagery. The hero, a young Englishman named Edward Rochester (Nathaniel Parker), arrives in Jamaica sick with fever after his long ocean passage; his stay on the island, during which he marries a ravishing Creole heiress named Antoinette Cosway (Karina Lombard), is a blur of heightened perception and disordered reason. As the marriage goes bad, events take on a nightmarish inevitability, as if they were moving toward a preordained end. They are: the hero of this picture is the younger self of the Rochester that Charlotte Brontë created in "Jane Eyre," the brooding landowner who kept his mad wife locked up in his English estate house; and Antoinette is the young woman who became his prisoner and his shameful secret. Duigan and his cinematographer, Geoff Burton, merge the luxuriant erotic tension of a tropical idyll with the clammy apprehension of gothic fiction. And the film is so serenely paced and so envelopingly lovely to watch that you may not realize until the end that it is, in the deepest sense, a horror movie—an intimate portrayal of the relationship between a monster and his victim. Also with Claudia Robinson, Rowena King, Rachel Ward, and Michael York. Stewart Copeland's score is superb.—T.R. (4/19/93) (Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

BLOOD BROTHERS

ON a recent warm morning in a back yard in Flatbush, Yolande Jean—an elegant woman who is a Haitian political activist, a nominee for this year's Reebok Human Rights Award, and an ex-prisoner of the H.I.V. detention camp at the United States naval base at Guantánamo Bay—sipped from a mug of sweet coffee and spoke quietly about some of her experiences. As an organizer for a grass-roots democratic movement, she had been hunted down after the September, 1991, coup that overthrew President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. She was held for five days in a Haitian military jail, where she was beaten and tortured; she had a miscarriage. Even after her release, the secret police continued to threaten her, and in May of 1992 she fled Haiti, leaving her two children, Hill and Jeff, with a family member.

Yolande Jean's boat was intercepted by the United States Coast Guard, and she was taken to Guantánamo, where she was interviewed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and passed the initial screening for refugee status. For weeks, she waited, in a makeshift camp, to be flown to the United States; instead, she was transferred to Guantánamo's Camp Bulkeley, a barren, isolated collection of cinder-block barracks surrounded by barbed wire. "An officer took me aside and told me that they'd found a problem in my blood," she said, stretching her legs in the sunshine and smoothing her skirt. "They didn't tell me what it was." Yolande Jean, along with more than two hundred other Haitian political refugees and their families,

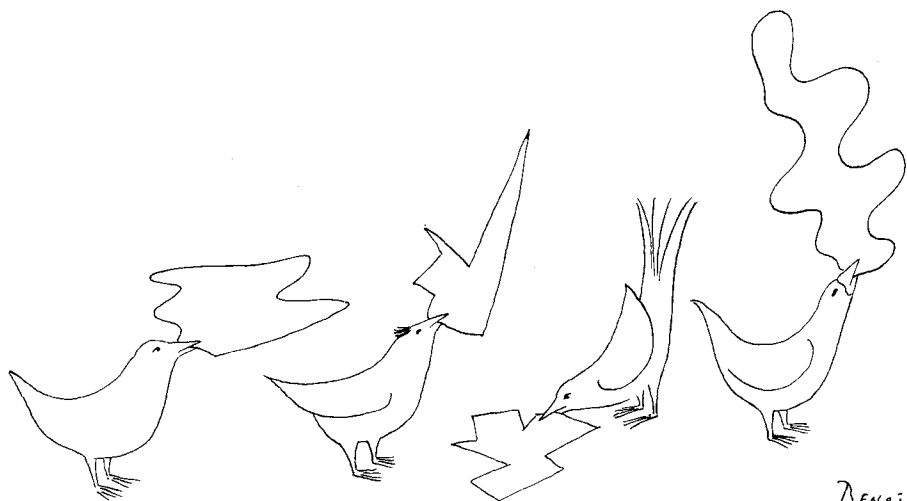
had been classified by the United States military as H.I.V.-positive.

Set up in 1992, Camp Bulkeley was one of the world's first detention centers for people with H.I.V. Its detainees were in effect prisoners, since they could not be repatriated and could not enter the United States. It has been characterized by one visiting doctor as "a public-health outrage and a disgrace." Its detainees lacked adequate sanitation and food, Yolande Jean said, and she added, "We're not criminals. We're not animals. We are people who wanted our country to be as good as any other country, who were fighting for liberty. How could it be that we were in this hell now?"

Ms. Jean became a leader inside the camp, preaching resistance, organizing late-night meetings of camp activists, and planning ways to obtain their freedom. Officials at Guantánamo handcuffed her and confined her in the brig for leading a hunger strike in the camp. At that time, she managed to have a letter smuggled out to her family, in Haiti.

"I have lost in the struggle for life," it said. "Take care of my children, so they have the strength to continue my struggle, because it is our duty. As for me, my obligation ends here. . . . Hill and Jeff, you no longer have a mother. Realize that you don't have a bad mother, it is simply that circumstances have taken me to where I am at this moment." Ms. Jean continued her hunger strike in the brig; she fainted repeatedly and was rehydrated, but she always resumed the hunger strike. Meanwhile, an American legal team that was working to close the camp had been negotiating, on a case by case basis, for the release of the detainees. In late March, a United States District Court established criteria for freeing refugees with AIDS. Two weeks later, Yolande Jean was finally released from Guantánamo; she had lost forty pounds.

It was a beautiful spring day in Brooklyn, with neighbors' children shouting in the yard next door, and Yolande Jean did not want to discuss her health. Her voice cracked only when she



talked about the health of the friends she had left behind in Camp Bulkeley—people she said were “accused of,” rather than diagnosed with, H.I.V. infection. “The night before I left,” she recalled, “my friends stayed up all night with me, watching the clock, holding my hands, doing my hair, kissing me, and telling me to call their children once I was free.” She paused. “Some of them cried. Every day, I think about the people in the camp, and how what I suffered they’re suffering, too.”

BIRD MAN

SAUL FRANK was standing on an active midtown sidewalk (Forty-second Street across from Grand Central), doing what he likes to do best in life, which is watch for peregrine falcons. It was a sunny Saturday afternoon, and a young couple passed by carrying a pair of trout rods packed in a case. Tourists milled around, looking pasty-faced in their new summer hats. Saul lifted his binoculars and swept the sky in an energetic way. “Peregrines sit on the Chrysler Building a lot,” he said. “They like the antennae.” He said there was a nesting couple way up on the MetLife Building, left of the “M” on the “METLIFE” sign. He observed a squad of

pigeons whirling above the station. “Those pigeons are in jeopardy, no question,” Saul said.

Saul Frank has been watching peregrines around the city for ten years now, and he’s writing a book on them, to be entitled “City Peregrines.” He calls himself a “raptorophile,” and he certainly looks like one. He has a thin, triangular face, tightly coiled hair, and a prominent, beaky nose. The peregrine had been virtually wiped out (“extirpated,” Saul says) east of the Mississippi by the sixties, but it has come back to the city, thanks to state funding and to a private initiative called the Peregrine Fund. There are nesting boxes in towers around town, and Saul visits them on his bicycle. He was born in the Bronx, and he brings some big-city hustle to bird-watching, which is usually a staid pastime. “I’m a New York City boy,” he says, “and these are New York City birds!”

For a time, Saul published his own newsletter, called *NYCAERIES* (New York City and Environs Raptor Involved & Enthusiasts Society). He was a state official for years, and he is a member of Mensa, which is a kind of international social club for people with high I.Q.s. He has had hobbies before (“I used to go skiing. I used to own a large boat”),

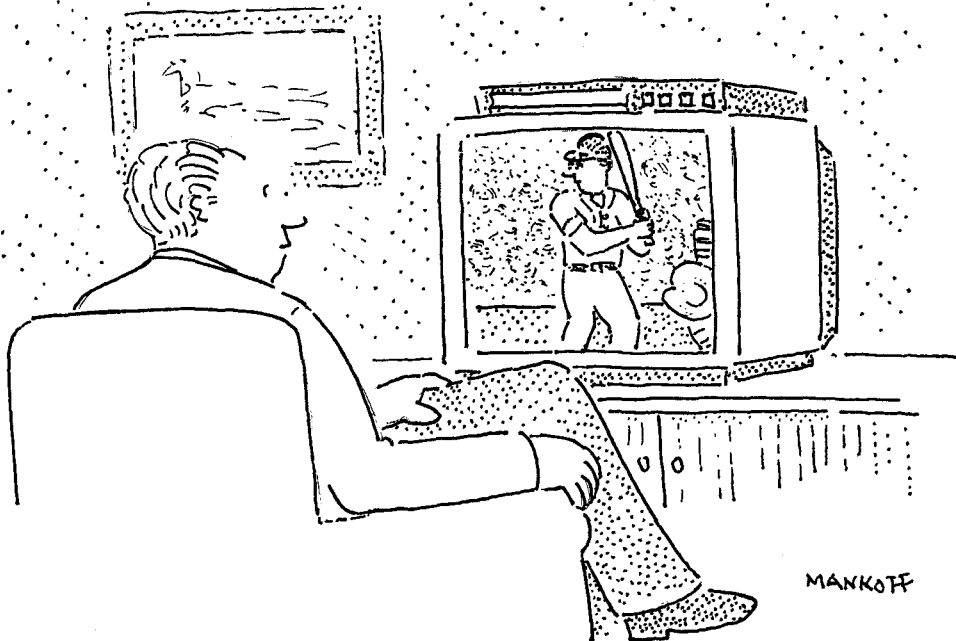
but now raptors take up most of his time. On the wing, peregrines are no faster than pigeons, but they turn into projectiles when they dive, reaching speeds of two hundred miles per hour. They roost on high ground and hunt in open spaces—out on the rivers, over Central Park—where their prey can’t hide. He’d seen two birds at the Throgs Neck Bridge make seven kills between sunup and noon.

“Pigeons are the hawks’ main food source in the New York area,” Saul said, “but in other places they might eat a duck.” Saul, who has logged enough field time (close to twenty-five hundred hours, he reckons) so that reputable ornithologists take him seriously, said he wasn’t partial to city pigeons—they rarely built nests, and they messed all over the place. Peregrines were cleaner birds, but they were accident-prone. “They can fly into windows. We’ve had them go down smokestacks,” he said. Saul knew of eleven pairs in the city, seven of which were producing young. One couple lives at Riverside Church, and another at New York Hospital, on York Avenue. There are two birds living down on Wall Street that haven’t nested, for whatever reason, and they like to fall from the World Trade Center into long, bombing dives.

Saul Frank peered up at the MetLife Building through his binoculars, his elbows askew. Traffic helicopters were flying around in the clear blue sky, and through binoculars, to the left of the giant “M,” you could see, as he said, a nesting box, with two poles sticking out, to serve as perches. A spray of white down appeared at the front of the box, and Saul said that it was one of the chicks. He believed that there were three chicks in the box, waiting for their noon ration of pigeon. The mother was with them, Saul said, and the male was probably up on a building nearby, watching the world for miles in every direction.

PUBLIC SPIRIT

AT a recent morning meeting of the staff of New York 1, the city’s first all-news cable television station, a producer proposed a story about a grisly murder in Brooklyn. Paul Sagan, who runs the fledgling enterprise, turned the idea down. “We already have one murder today, and that ought to do it,” he



“Buzz bats left, throws right, and supports limited military involvement in Bosnia.”

said. Murder has been a staple of local television news for so long that Mr. Sagan's decision seemed almost revolutionary. But New York 1 is a high-minded enterprise.

The channel is available to nearly one million households in the city. It is owned by Time Warner, which is reported to have invested ten million dollars to start it up, in September of 1992. It has a state-of-the-art studio on West Forty-second Street and a staff of hardworking, non-union young reporters who carry their own cameras. The sight of them talking to unattended cameras on tripods has become a familiar one around the city.

Mr. Sagan is thirty-four years old and as eager as a volunteer in a political campaign. He wears suspenders decorated with lions and lion-tamers. "The local news shows on the other stations have to appeal to Long Island and New Jersey—to Brooklyn and Westchester—so they have to find stories that produce a sort of gee-whiz reaction in everyone," he said. "But those stories are disposable news. You forget about them tomorrow. We cover issues like crime and law enforcement, but in a way that means something to people. The reporters on the other stations are generalists—they cover whatever comes up that day. Our people have beats, and they know them cold."

Andrew Kirtzman covers politics for New York 1, and was at City Hall the other day when George Marlin was there, declaring his candidacy for the Conservative Party nomination for mayor. Mr. Kirtzman shouted questions from behind his camera but kept being drowned out by a noisy cluster of print and radio reporters huddled around Mr. Marlin. Eventually, though, he made himself heard. He pointed out later that he had made the only videotape of Mr. Marlin's announcement. "At half the events I cover, my camera is the only one there," he said.

"There's a continuing battle in this town about what constitutes news," Leland Jones, Mayor Dinkins' press secretary, says. "With the other local stations, there's a formula: murder, murder, fire, human-interest story, sports, weather, bye-bye. New York 1 has bet on politics." In fact, each weekday night, the station broadcasts a half-hour show called "The Road to City Hall," which

SURVIVAL OF THE HIPPEST

I FELL asleep listening to "Kamakiriad" one night and woke up at 5 A.M. in a panic, and remembered Donald Fagen talking about his nightmares. Donald, of course, is an intellectual rock-and-roller—one half of Steely Dan. At the time he talked about his nightmares, he had been in the next-to-last stages of making the "Kamakiriad" album. "I had a nightmare the other night that my girlfriend said I was ugly," Donald said, with no trace of expression in his voice. His spirit is in slower motion than other people's. "And I kept protesting that I used to be ugly, but I wasn't ugly anymore. And she was saying that I was still ugly." Donald, who has a full, melodica-player's mouth, was hunched over, in a short black leather jacket, and he looked like a cross between Seymour Glass and Montgomery Clift.

"When I toured with Steely Dan, in the early seventies," Donald said, "I used to have recurring dreams that someone in the front row would mimic all my gestures as I was doing them. Like, if I was singing they would open their mouth at the same time I was opening my mouth. Whatever I was doing, they would do it."

Donald learned how to sing from his mother. "My father went to work early in the morning, leaving the two of us to fill the day, out on the Jersey frontier. She knew hundreds of songs and she sang one after another. We lived in a two-family house in Passaic. I think it was sort of a frumpy, late-forties-style house. And then we moved to this housing-development thing, and it was very shocking to me."

I lay there and remembered Donald in his recording studio, on a

gray sofa with pink flecks in it, saying, "I used to take the bus in to New York. I'd go to the Village Vanguard or this place called Slugs. At the Vanguard, they put me on the kiddie banquettes, there near the drums. I saw Charlie Mingus there once. I had a little conversation with the piano player Jaki Byard, you know, and I asked him a few musical questions

and he was really nice to me. And occasionally I'd miss the last bus, which was at one-thirty, I think, and I'd sleep on a bench in the Port Authority."

I remembered one night at the Paramount Hotel with Donald. Walter Becker, the other half of Steely Dan, was there. Walter has what Donald calls "this blond,



Aryan-looking complexion." Walter produced "Kamakiriad" and plays guitar on it. Donald and Walter are like one person. I asked which one wrote the Steely Dan lyric where the sailor "blacked out on the stairs," and Walter said, "We both did." I asked them to sing "Rikki Don't Lose That Number" for me, and they sang a few bars of the Four Seasons' "Walk Like a Man." I asked Walter what he really thought about Donald, and he said, "Somewhere between Dinah Shore and the Marquis de Sade."

At around eleven-thirty that night, outside the Paramount, Walter was waving goodbye, and Donald gave me a quick kiss. He said my lipstick tasted like "little Jewish candies." I remembered that, and how he had said that though he still had nightmares, "if I can make it to the studio without being hit by a Plymouth Fury, I'm all right."

Then I got up, had some coffee, and went to work. —ALISON ROSE



*"It seems the patient wishes to exercise his right to choose his own doctor.
Is there another doctor in the house?"*

chronicles the race for mayor in exhaustive detail, devoting entire programs to lack-lustre topics like the Queens Democrats.

Even the Mayor's press secretary wonders if this might not be too much of a good thing. "To be honest, I don't know if anyone but the political junkies is following the campaign at this point," he says.

JUVENILIA

ON the southwest corner of Second Street and Avenue A is a nameless bar (its patrons refer to it as "2A"), and it has on its second floor large picture windows through which one can survey the goings on in the neighborhood. Across Second Street is a wide patch of sidewalk where a street vender can usually be seen selling selections from other people's wardrobes. Above the sidewalk hangs a small billboard that reads, in faded letters, "Pretty Decorating." Diagonally across the street sits a

large Korean grocery called Ave. A Farm. And right across Avenue A sits a store named Schneider's. Starting at about six, and lasting all night, a steady flow of pedestrian traffic moves east on Second Street and back again; one of the area's larger heroin suppliers operates out of a doorway between Avenues A and B. Few of those people look up at the gray awning above Schneider's, advertising "Baby Carriages" and "Juvenile Furniture" in big red letters, and, in smaller letters beneath, the following items: "Gifts, Cradles, Strollers, Hi Chairs, Play Pens, Porta Cribs, Bedding, Toys, Teen Furniture, Dressing Tables, Infant Needs, Bassinets."

The area used to be a mecca for stores specializing in baby furniture. There was Ben's Babyland, and Schachter's, and Lederman's, but they've all gone out of business. Schneider's is the only one left. The other day, its proprietor, Roy Waxman, was sitting near the front door, wearing blue slacks, a gray polo

shirt with the Schneider's logo stitched on it in red letters, a gray cap, and gold-rimmed glasses. A black cordless phone was pressed to his cheek, in a manner suggesting that he rarely let go of it. On being asked about the history of the store, he replies, "Schneider is my wife Blanche's maiden name. My father-in-law, let him rest in peace, started the business. One year later, I came in. This was 1947."

One of the secrets of Schneider's survival may be Mr. Waxman's unlimited enthusiasm for juvenile furniture. Walking through a showroom crammed with chairs, cribs, beds, tables, and a number of objects whose names would elude those unschooled in the baby-furniture field, he waves at a row of chairs. "This is the biggest item. I would never have expected this item to sell so much. We must sell ten a week—even twenty a week. It's a gliding rocker. They nurse their baby in them." He sits and begins to rock back and forth. Mr. Waxman is the sort of person who can sit in a rocking chair and still seem vigorous. The chair's motion is that of a rocking chair, but the part of the chair that touches the ground remains stationary. "This is very popular for people in apartments," Mr. Waxman goes on. "Your downstairs neighbor don't know when you're rocking. You can rock in the middle of the night, nobody knows! Two o'clock in the morning, you're rocking!"

In an aisle between lines of strollers, Mr. Waxman pauses in front of one of them. "Now, Maclaren is the Mercedes-Benz of the baby business. The best baby carriage in the world is this carriage here." He proceeds to demonstrate the many features of the stroller, shifting the canopy into different positions and turning things inside out. "This carriage has made us a lot of money in the last six years," he says. "But they've stopped making it. They want to go on to something where they make more money. I am willing to buy a thousand a month, and I'll go on TV to sell them, but they can't do it." A hint of sadness creeps into his voice. "It's the best stroller in the world. Whoever owns it loves it! It's the end of an era. I have a couple hundred left, and that'll be it."

A call to the distributor confirmed Mr. Waxman's statement that Maclaren, a British firm, has discontinued the model, and also revealed that it had been marketed under the name The Dreamer. ♦



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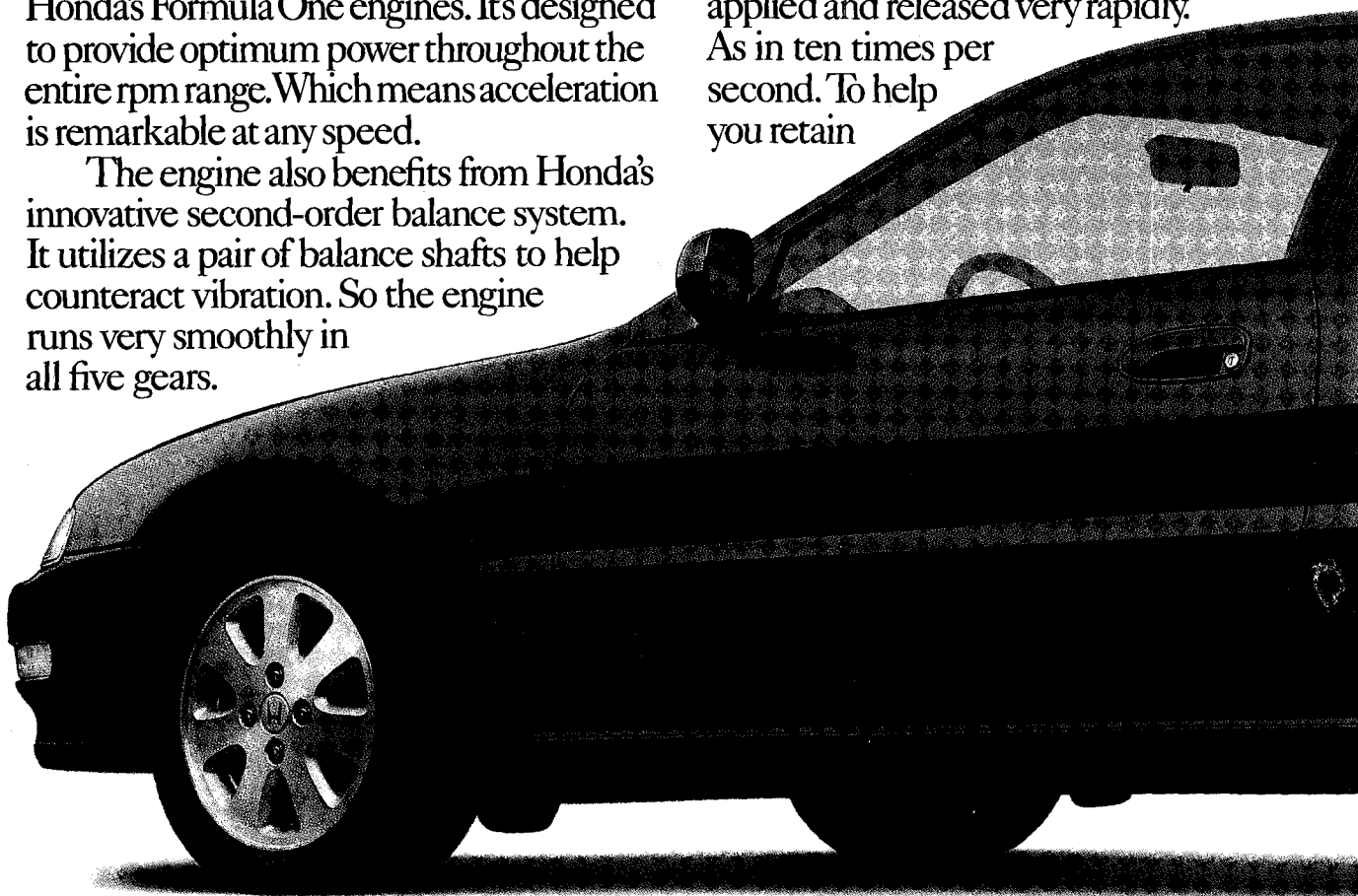
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steering control in hard braking situations.

The power steering is variable-assist. At low speeds, the steering wheel turns easily. So parking is a breeze. At highway speeds, less assist provides better road-feel.

Inside, everything is power. Door locks, windows, mirrors and the sunroof.

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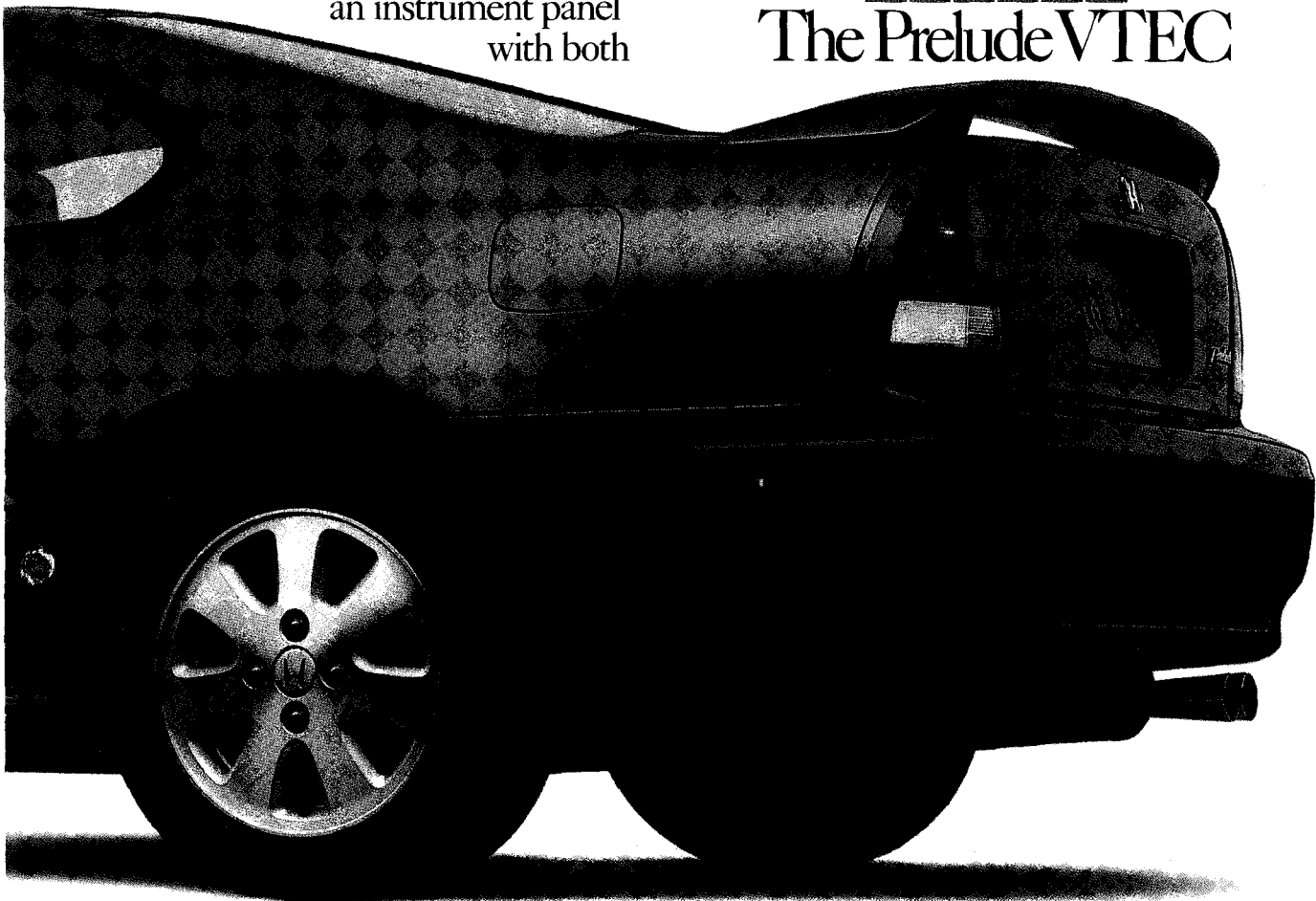
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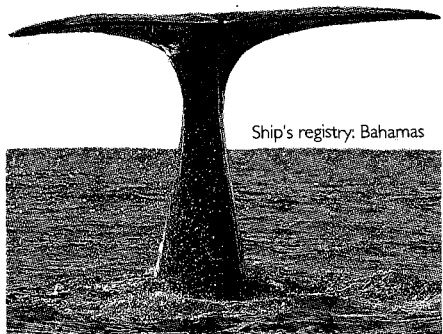
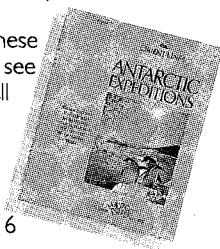
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ANNALS OF EDUCATION

**THE HEARTS AND MINDS
OF CITY COLLEGE**

Leonard Jeffries may have won his fight in court, but Edmund Gordon and others are continuing the battle for the future of black intellectuals on campus.

BY JAMES TRAUB



Loyalists of Jeffries (left) have distributed flyers with titles such as "Ten Good Reasons Why Edmund Gordon Must Resign." Reason No. 6 is that Gordon (right) is "interracially married."

WHEN a federal jury concluded in mid-May that the City University of New York had violated Leonard Jeffries' First Amendment rights by removing him from his job as the chairman of the Black Studies Department of City College, few people at City College were surprised; many of them, in fact, agreed with the jury that Jeffries had been fired for expressing controversial but constitutionally protected opinions in a speech he gave in the summer of 1991. But they dreaded the result. "There'll be no living with him now," a student adviser said. "He was very polite in front of the cameras, but we all know that that's not the real Leonard Jeffries." Michele Wallace, a leading black feminist and a professor in City's English Department, says, "It's been so frustrating to hear people say, 'Sure we disagree, but the most important thing is to protect Jeffries' freedom of speech.'" What is lost in this abstraction, Wallace feels, is Jeffries' presence, his effect on the campus, his status as racial symbol. "Just knowing he's down the hall makes discussion of race and ethnicity

loaded," she says. In her view Jeffries has, disastorously, become "the representative voice of the black community and City College."

The court decision, which includes four hundred thousand dollars in monetary damages, is sure to enhance Jeffries' heroic standing in the eyes of his supporters. It will probably also lead to the restoration of his chairmanship. (Judge Kenneth Conboy had not rendered a decision on the issue as of this writing.) In that case, Edmund Gordon, who has been the chairman for the past year, will remain as a tenured professor but will cease to exercise any real authority in the department. Gordon, the former chairman of African and Afro-American Studies at Yale and one of the foremost black social scientists of the last quarter century, has spent the past year trying to persuade respected black scholars to come to City College, and in some cases succeeding. He has also tried, in modest ways, to offer himself as an alternative role model for black students. The difference is hard to miss: in class, Gordon is circumspect and scholarly, while Jeffries

GARY PANTER

is grandiose and deeply self-absorbed. The two men are virtual antitypes.

It's impossible to know how City College will handle Jeffries' expected reinstatement; the school has a new president, Dr. Yolanda T. Moses, who has not yet taken office. A likely scenario, though, is that the Black Studies Department will be put on a sort of starvation diet, while Gordon shifts his efforts to more congenial departments at City College. Thus, while the institutional battle appears to be over, the underlying struggle for the hearts and minds of black students is likely to continue. It is here, rather than in federal court, that the real action lies. Leonard Jeffries and Edmund Gordon represent the extremes in a debate not only over black studies but over the status of black intellectuals in American life.

Leonard Jeffries is a charismatic figure, with an almost cultlike following at City College. He moves across the campus like a heavyweight champion, trailed by an entourage that often includes bodyguards, gofers, members of "the community," and a tall, saturnine Nigerian in a knitted cap named Taiwo Ogunade—his "pilot fish," as Jeffrey Rosen, the dean of the college's Division of Social Sciences, calls him. The air around Jeffries seems charged with menace. At a rally he addressed last spring, he was flanked on one side by a stout young man known as Brother Steve, who scanned the crowd like a Secret Service agent, and on the other by a grim figure in dark sunglasses and a trench-coat, with a drooping mustache and folded arms. Jeffries deftly toyed with the prospect of confrontation. "We have to take over the college!" he thundered. There had, in fact, been rumors of a strike or a lockout, and the crowd suddenly fell silent. Then a few people began to whistle and applaud. Was Jeffries issuing an invitation? He let the moment play itself out, grinned, and said, "I'm not saying 'Torch it.' Torching is a last resort." No, he meant that the time had come to take over the college "intellectually and spiritually." But the possibility of the "last resort" hung in the air.

Jeffries' diehard partisans number only a few hundred, at most, out of a total of eleven thousand five hundred City College undergraduates. The overwhelming majority scarcely notice his

existence. But his influence is disproportionate. He has his own cadre of loyalists, a group called the Statewide African Studies Movement, which has spent much of the past year distributing flyers with titles such as "Ten Good Reasons Why Edmund Gordon Must Resign." (Reason No. 6 is that Gordon is "interracially married.") In recent years, the Black Studies Department has heavily influenced the student government and the two main student newspapers. Teachers at City often find it impossible to discuss Jeffries in their classes, because a few of his supporters are likely to be present and they invariably bully other students out of expressing opinions.

A significant number of black students look up to Jeffries for the simple reason that he is a symbol of black intransigence in the face of white power. Many of them scarcely bother with the content of his ideas. Rodney Smith, an English major, says that he considers some of Jeffries' theories absurd and, unlike Jeffries, is not a separatist. But, Smith says, "we're in our infancy as a people. We need to be able to defend ourselves in the white world, and that includes the option of separatism."

"He verbalizes the frustration that a lot of African-Americans have," A. J. Franklin, a professor in City's clinical-psychology program, says. City's more sophisticated students, whether black or Hispanic or white (thirty-nine per cent of the college's undergraduates are black), tend to give the Black Studies Department a wide berth. A black student in City's honors program said that she had sat in on several of Jeffries' classes. Jeffries, she said, harped on the same set of eccentric ideas in each class—yet "the students accepted it all uncritically. I think many of them came from backgrounds where they hadn't been exposed to ideas like this before. I think a lot of young black people are being lost this way—a whole generation of young blacks is being lost."

Was that hyperbole? I wanted to know what Jeffries professed in class, and how he professed it. I hadn't heard encouraging reports. Charles Powell, then an adjunct teacher in the department and a stout defender of Jeffries, had told me, "Jeffries would make whites uncomfortable; that's just the way he is. He's the stereotype of the male-chauvinist, nationalistic type of person." But one

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morning last fall I saw Jeffries in the halls and asked if I might sit in on his World Civilizations class, which was about to begin. He looked distinctly amused. "There's a white media conspiracy out to destroy me, and I'm sure you're part of it," he said. "But I don't care. I'm not afraid of you or the New York Times or any of them." In the speech that had got him into such trouble Jeffries had recalled being told by a friend, "They're targeting you for death." And he had said that, like Malcolm and Martin, he was prepared for martyrdom.

The class had thirty-five or forty students, most of them black, the remainder Hispanic and Asian. Brother Steve was amiably greeting students from a post just outside the doorway. Taiwo was setting up books against the blackboard. Taped to one wall was a handout headed "Edmund Gordon Must Resign from City College." The blackboard was filled with vaguely Masonic-looking symbols—triangles inside circles. Inside one triangle were the words "inner core spiritual values." The words "thesis," "antithesis," and "synthesis" appeared at the three points of the triangle. Under the circle were the words "interaction," "search for truth," and "polarity/duality." I had plenty of time to study these symbols, because Jeffries didn't arrive until fifteen minutes after the class's scheduled

starting time—even though I had just seen him in the hallway. I later learned that he had been, by his own standards, prompt. Of the three other times that I attended his class, he was twenty-five minutes late once, and twice he didn't show up at all—Taiwo was left to lecture on Yoruba culture while students brazenly walked out the door.

When Jeffries arrived, wearing his trademark dashiki and cap, he gave the class the ancient Egyptian salutation "Hautep!" and the students chanted back, "Hautep!" Jeffries gives an impression of agility: he moves quickly and lightly across a room, and he speaks rapidly, with the fluency and the oratorical devices of a gifted preacher. He warned the students to be on their "best behavior," since a visitor was in the room. I had been feeling intensely self-conscious, and I relaxed slightly. Jeffries went on to say that someone with the visitor's name had written an article critical of his speech—one of the few articles, he said, that had taken his ideas seriously. Then, for the first time, he turned to look at me, and archly asked if I "might happen" to be that same person. I was, I said. Now I wasn't feeling quite so relaxed.

"When you read a critique of Dr. J. in the press, you read that he doesn't have any qualifications, no publications, no degrees, nothing," Jeffries said. "So let's

talk about credentials." Jeffries wrote down his name on one side of a circle, mine on the other. He then began reproducing his résumé. For his senior thesis at Lafayette College, in 1959, he had written about the urban crisis. "I want you to know that I was a man before my time," he said, and he instructed Taiwo to retrieve a copy of the thesis from his office. Taiwo exited. The year before that, he said, he had been assigned to introduce Justice William O. Douglas to President Sékou Touré, of Guinea. "How old were *you* in 1958?" he asked me—lightly, mockingly. I shifted uneasily in my seat. "Four," I said. The class tittered. After college, he had won a Rotary Club scholarship to study in Lausanne, and there he had learned "perfect French." And, with that, he began speaking French—perfectly passable French—while looking straight at me, as if daring me to keep up. I declined, and Jeffries switched back to English. Major foundations had given him thirteen thousand dollars to complete his doctoral dissertation, he said—"and those are nineteen-sixties dollars."

The class had been completely silent, but now a student in front of me asked, "But how were you treated by the Europeans, Dr. J.?" The question sounded suspiciously like a setup.

Jeffries flashed a smile and said, "In Europe, I was treated not just as a man but as a black prince!" The student started to ask a second question, but Jeffries appeared not to notice. "Women *ran* to me to give me their children," he said. "When I went to the drugstore, girls were running, literally running, to serve me toothpaste." (Jeffries once told an interviewer that men in Europe had offered him their wives in exchange for a homosexual encounter.)

The student in front of me finally managed to wedge in his question: "But, ironically, Dr. J., when you came back to America, how did the descendants of those same Europeans treat you?"

"Like dirt!" Jeffries cried. Whereas in Africa, he said, "they treated me not as a prince, not as a hero, but as a god!"

Jeffries finally began to do some "pyramid analysis" on the blackboard. In his analytic scheme,



"I've been thinking I'll hold off choosing a specialty until I see how Hillary's scheme shakes out, feewise."

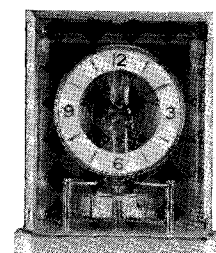
circles represent "systems," while triangles, or pyramids, represent values. The core of Jeffries' philosophy is that peoples of African descent have a "humanistic, spiritualistic value system," while European-Americans have values that are "egotistic, individualistic, and exploitative." He refers to Africans as "sun people" and to Europeans as "ice people." How other peoples fit into this scheme is not at all clear. Jeffries' sources are eclectic, to say the least. He extrapolates his sun people-ice people model from "Civilization or Barbarism," an eccentric, polymathic work by the Senegalese scholar Cheikh Anta Diop, but often cites as corroboration a 1986 *Newsweek* cover story on the Ice Age and an obscure work called "The Iceman Inheritance."

A circle on the far right, which represented the "European-American world system," held an upside-down pyramid to symbolize the perverse values upon which the system was founded. It was a failed system—"land-poor, people-poor, and resource-poor"—until slavery made it possible to exploit the New World colonies. The system evolved—and here Jeffries ticked off the words written around the circle—from chattel slavery to wage slavery and then to its modern form, debt slavery. The imperative of enslavement came from someplace beyond history—from something inherent, apparently, in white people.

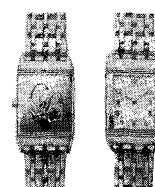
Jeffries was angry now, and he wheeled from the blackboard to face the class directly. "In Brazil," he said, "black youths are being killed like dogs in the street." The students shuddered. Jeffries was talking faster and faster, pacing back and forth across the room. Interruption was unthinkable. He talked about Hollywood, and the old racial stereotypes. He said, "This is the institutionalization of racism that *the Jewish community is largely responsible for!*" Now, for the first time, Jeffries was shouting. He talked more about sun people and ice people. And then he came back to the Jews—the Jews who had run City College and had opposed the call for "open admissions" during the great struggle of 1969. "We've never been given *anything* by the Jews!" Jeffries shouted. He turned back to me and asked how I had the "audacity" to question his reading of Cheikh Diop. Had I even read the book? All of it? He read out a paragraph of Diop, and the class jeered. A living

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"It wasn't as bad as all that. You're just mad because you got suckered into it by all those rave reviews."

example of an abstract enemy had walked into the very midst of the class; he was staging a confrontation and, of course, winning.

Finally, Jeffries reached his great, consuming obsession—the involvement of the Jews in the slave trade. He was speaking rapidly, almost automatically. "We started looking into it, and we saw who was involved," he told the class. "The evidence just came *rolling in*. We found the involvement of the Dutch, and the French, and the Portuguese, and the English, and the Bremen Germans, and the Danes and the Swedes, and the Catholics, *as well as the Jews!*" And now he was rattling off dates, and stray facts, and titles and authors. "Don't just listen to Dr. J.," he said. "It's in the books. It's all there. But I've talked about the Jews, so the whole power structure, the whole Jewish-controlled media, has set out to destroy me." Now Jeffries was pacing rapidly, and he was shouting at the top of his lungs. "On this altar . . . I'm being slaughtered, my family is being slaughtered, a whole *community* is being

slaughtered!" he cried. "But we won't bow down. We won't give up. *'A luta continua!'* The struggle continues." Jeffries turned away to look out the window, and the class burst into applause.

EDMUND GORDON startled a student forum earlier this year by observing that, while he hadn't known Marcus Garvey, he counted W. E. B. Du Bois as "a personal mentor." Du Bois, he told the students, was his model of engagement: a leader, an activist, a tireless public figure, whose scholarship was nevertheless "irreproachable." Gordon refers often to Du Bois' injunction that what he called "the talented tenth" should dedicate itself to serving the community. The ideal of a dedicated black bourgeoisie shaped Gordon's character and career. He has none of the chafing anger, the anxiety about mainstream achievement, the sense of the personal as the political which mark so many black thinkers who came of age during the civil-rights struggle and the Black Power movement.

Gordon was born into something like

the talented thousandth. His great-grandfather and grandfather were Presbyterian ministers, and his father was one of three black doctors in Goldsboro, North Carolina. After Gordon received his B.S. from Howard University, in 1942, he was himself ordained a Presbyterian minister, and worked with gang members in Harlem. Later, he went into counselling, and was licensed as a developmental psychologist. In 1957, he received his doctorate in education from Columbia, and by the early sixties he was one of the nation's leading authorities on education for the disadvantaged. He gave court testimony about the destructive impact of segregated schools on black children and was one of the founders of the Head Start program. In 1965, he was appointed the chief of research for Head Start, thus placing him at the very heart of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society.

In 1968, Gordon was given tenure at Teachers College in New York. He was a scholars' scholar: he never wrote the big book that would establish him as a public figure, but he was a prolific contributor to academic journals, a pivot between the worlds of scholarship and policy, a mentor to a generation of black educators. Among black scholars in education and psychology, "there's no one of Ed's stature," a former student, Dr. Irving Hamer, who is now an executive at Simon & Schuster, says. "There's a huge gap between Kenneth Clark and Ed, and everyone else." In 1979, Gordon moved to Yale, and was later given an endowed chair. In 1988, he was named the chairman of Yale's African and Afro-American Studies program. "Everybody liked Ed," recalls Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the chairman of Harvard's Afro-American Studies Department, who was then at Yale. "He's very professorial in the Yale mold." There was a little bit of Mr. Chips in Gordon. "He used to actually make soup himself and bring it to faculty meetings," Gates says.

Gordon's gentle demeanor and his faith in rational discourse make him seem more conservative than he is. He refers to his own work as "liberatory scholarship," and he was an early advocate both of black-studies programs and of multiculturalism and the multicultural curriculum. Gordon was, in fact, a critical figure in one of the great, noisy battles over "the canon." In 1989, a task force appointed by the New York State

Education Commissioner, Thomas Sobol, issued a report called "A Curriculum of Inclusion," which accused school texts of fostering a "Eurocentric" bias. "Stereotyping and misinformation," the authors claimed, had "a damaging effect on the psyche" of minority students, while inculcating "inappropriately elitist attitudes" in white students. An appendix to the report, on "curricular materials for African-Americans," declared that school texts reflected "deep-seated pathologies of racial hatred" and a "wholesale policy of destroying the positive aspects and attributes of African-Americans." The writer of that chapter was Leonard Jeffries. Jeffries was also credited with helping to produce a first draft of the report.

Both cultural conservatives and liberals read "A Curriculum of Inclusion" as an attack on the very idea of a shared American identity. The report was scathingly criticized by the education scholar Diane Ravitch, among others. Sobol, under pressure from the Board of Regents as well as the public, commissioned a new report. And this time he turned to a scholar whose prestige and objectivity placed him beyond cavil—Edmund Gordon. Gordon is immensely proud of the report that he and his co-author, Francis Roberts, produced, titled "One Nation, Many Peoples"—and for a characteristic reason. "When it was presented, I got a standing ovation from the Board of Regents, but Leonard Jeffries complimented me on it as well," he says. "We had not repudiated the findings of the original report, but we had put it in an intellectual framework that people could agree or disagree with."

The hue and cry over multiculturalism put Jeffries and Gordon on the same stage for the first time. Gordon's name was soon forgotten, but Leonard Jeffries had tasted fame. He had an audience, especially in the black media. And he was to keep playing to that audience until he was overheard once again, in July of 1991.

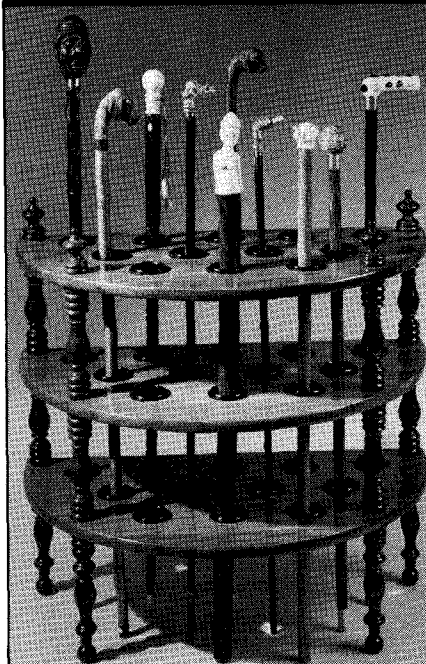
LEONARD JEFFRIES owes a great part of his success to the dynamic of racial challenge, and racial tension, that began with the Black Power movement, in the late nineteen-sixties. The assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968, hastened the decline of the integrationist ethic, which was already being supplanted by Black Power's message of

self-reliance and separatism. Black students at campuses all over the country began demanding separate programs and living facilities; above all, they demanded the establishment of programs of black studies—in effect, a department of their own. For many scholars, black and white, such ultimatums represented an assault on the intellectual integrity of the university. But college officials found that a black-studies department was a relatively cheap way to buy campus peace. The Marxist historian Eugene Genovese accused these administrators of practicing "a benevolent paternalism that is neither more nor less than racist." The subsequent neglect of conventional academic standards in many black-studies departments suggests that Genovese was right.

City College's Black Studies Department was baptized in the same fire. For generations, City had had an almost mythic status as a source of social mobility for New York's poor—above all, for Jewish immigrants. By 1969, City was a virtually all-white school in the middle of Harlem. In that year, a group of black and Puerto Rican students seized the South Campus to dramatize their demands that the school's exacting admissions standards be modified to admit many more minority students, and that a separate School of Black Studies be established. The takeover compressed the slow process of ethnic succession into a single, electrifying moment. There were incidents of racial violence; more were threatened. In the end, City College, and CUNY as a whole, switched over to an open admissions system; and in 1971 the college faculty reluctantly voted to establish a series of ethnic-studies departments, including Black Studies.

Leonard Jeffries was the department's first full-time chairman. Jeffries had taught political science at City in 1969 and had then become the founding chairman of Black Studies at San Jose State University. He was an important figure among the "cultural nationalists"—a group within the Black Power movement which was distinguished by its wholesale repudiation of white culture and its celebration of Africa and things African. Jeffries had travelled to Africa repeatedly over the previous decade, and had built up an impressive network of contacts. He had just completed his doctoral dissertation, on subnational politics in the Ivory Coast, when a search committee from City

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College interviewed him for the Black Studies chairmanship and recommended him for the position. City's president, Robert Marshak, had promised full-professor status and tenure to a qualified candidate. Jeffries, with no publications to his credit, and only a few years of teaching experience, was clearly not such a candidate, but Moyibi Amoda, the interim chairman of the department and the head of the search team, says that Jeffries was "prodigiously qualified—by real standards." Another member of the search team, Franck Laraque, recalls that black students and faculty threatened to provoke a crisis if Marshak declined to extend the offer to Jeffries. (Amoda says that there was no such threat.) Marshak agreed to give Jeffries tenure on arrival, and Jeffries proceeded to vindicate the tradition that makes tenure a reward for academic achievement by failing to produce a single scholarly work after he assumed the post.

Jeffries' academic achievements are astonishingly meagre. He has spoken at times of having written a fifty-page "booklet," but the work turns out to have been commissioned for the junior-high-school market, and was never published. He has said that he was "the major consultant" for Alex Haley's "Roots," but this is apparently a reference to a grant that he and Haley received in 1972, after the research for "Roots" had been largely completed, to develop "a library/repository of black heritage." In fact, Jeffries is not a scholar but a popularizer. He helped get Diop's book translated into English, and has introduced it to a wide audience. Molefi Kete Asante, the chairman of Temple University's African-American Studies Department, has defended Jeffries on a number of occasions—significantly during Jeffries' lawsuit against CUNY—but he has also made a point of distancing himself from some of Jeffries' claims. One black scholar says, "Asante looks at Jeffries and sees millions of dollars of grant money go down the tubes."

Jeffries draws his strength, and his convictions, not so much from scholarship as from the street, where ancient grievances and suspicions are perpetually revived. He has argued that AIDS is a conspiracy to destroy poor blacks, and that homosexuality is an evil spread by Europeans. He seems fascinated by the subject of melanin, yet has been some-

what coy on the question of whether and how the races differ biologically. In one of his classes I heard him say, "Melanin is important because it shows *difference* in human development. We never said Africans are superior." But in the next breath he said, "White people consider themselves the chosen people because they have white skin, when in point of fact the chosen people are people of color." He has also referred to studies that claim blacks, because they have more melanin, are inherently more creative—and hence more human—than whites.

Mainstream black scholars tend to consider Jeffries an out-and-out crackpot. "He *is* the fringe," Gates says. "He's the right wing." Bruce Hare, the chairman of African-American Studies at Syracuse University, says, "He has replaced one set of myths and legends with another set of myths and legends." And yet Jeffries cannot be dismissed as a marginal figure, if only because his fringe is so densely populated. At the trial, he ticked off the names of several black-studies organizations of which he is a member or a leader. One of the first "melanin conferences," he said, had been held on the City College campus. He is a favorite speaker among black student groups, and last year he addressed eight hundred and fifty students at Harvard alone. Jeffries is an extremist, but he lives in a world sympathetic to extremism—or, at any rate, unwilling to repudiate it.

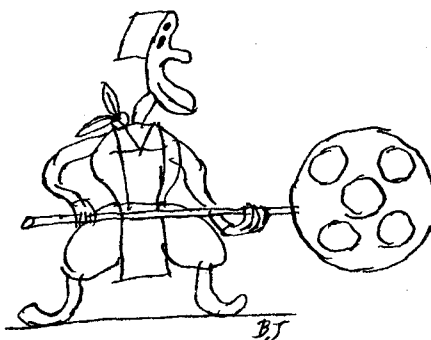
From the outset, the Black Studies Department at City thought of itself less as a community of scholars than as a vanguard force, a church militant. The central task of the department, Moyibi Amoda says, was "nation-building": forging a new, Afrocentric consciousness in black students. Jeffries was ideally suited to this task, not only by his energy and charisma but by his flair for confrontation. In the fall of 1981, a black

student, Oswald Facey, claimed that while he was campaigning for student office Jeffries had shoved and verbally abused him. Facey was running against the ticket that Jeffries backed—an act of lèse-majesté, apparently. In an interview with the *Campus*, the principal student newspaper, Facey called Jeffries "a racist." The *Campus* called for Jeffries' resignation, citing his non-stop meddling in student government. The college's president—a black psychologist named Bernard Harleston, who was new that year—ordered an inquiry, but Facey failed to testify, and the issue was dropped.

Three years later, in the course of a lunch meeting that included Mitchell Seligson, who was a candidate for director of City's international-studies program, Jeffries launched into a diatribe in which he declared that President Harleston was the pawn of a Jewish conspiracy and asked Seligson, "Why does a Jew like you want to work at a place like this?" Seligson withdrew his candidacy, and wrote a biting letter to Harleston. Another investigation was launched, and this time it was conclusive. Martin Tamny, then the acting dean of Social Sciences, who had been present at the lunch, attested that he had heard Jeffries' remarks, as did the others who were present. Tamny recommended that Jeffries be stripped of his chairmanship. Harleston sent Jeffries and other college officials a letter saying that "such comments and remarks . . . are intolerable and indefensible," but declined to take any further action.

Tamny was appalled at Harleston's having passed up a golden opportunity to dismiss Jeffries. The department chairman, apparently, had taken the president's measure. But perhaps he had taken his own colleagues' measure as well. Tamny says, "Seligson was outraged that no one had said anything at the time. If anyone should have said anything, it was probably me. I've thought about that meeting hundreds of times; I don't know why I didn't speak. I suppose it was because that was the sort of thing one heard from Jeffries all the time."

Another inquiry was begun in 1988, after a white student wrote a four-part series in the *Campus* describing Jeffries' teachings. The student later said that he had actually enjoyed the class, and he refused to testify before a panel. But then, in some way, the disputes were scarcely



the point. "Len is just an irresponsible person," James Watts, the chairman of the History Department, says. "He's a lousy chairman—everybody knows that." Black Studies was a stagnant department; only about thirty students majored in the field. City College has any number of stagnant departments, but Black Studies seemed not so much neglectful of college norms as openly disdainful of them.

"The department used to hand in massive numbers of incompletes," Jeffrey Rosen, the dean of Social Sciences, says. Members of its faculty would vanish before the end of the semester, or simply not bother to hand in grades. A few years ago, City changed its rules so that an incomplete, if it was not made up after one semester, became an F. Rosen explained to Jeffries that the department was harming its own students, but "Len said that black students had to work, so they weren't able to hand in their homework," Rosen recalls. "I pointed out that the same students were handing in homework in their other classes. That's not a conversation that's going to go very far with Len."

Jeffries himself was one of the offenders. Even students who support him complain about his constant lateness. "Once, he came into class on time, and I was late," a student recalls, "and he said, 'I'm the one who's allowed to be late.'" Jeffries seems to understand his nation-building role in paternalistic, even authoritarian, terms. He treats his students as a chorus; dissent is unheard of, and a spurious air of consensus reigns. A Haitian student who had Jeffries for World Civilizations this spring says, "I regret taking this class, because I'm not learning anything. This man thinks he knows everything, so how can you ask him a question? I don't speak in class, because I don't want to get in trouble. If I try to say anything, they will say, 'You are black on the outside, but white on the inside.'" He has been equally disturbed at Jeffries' academic standards. The class is supposed to expose students to the world's cultures, but Jeffries teaches only his Afrocentric rap. He assigns ten essays and a research paper, but doesn't specify length or subject, and doesn't return the papers. "I don't think he reads them—I think the old lady does," the student says, referring to Mother Franklin, another Jeffries hanger-on, who acts as class doyenne. Most stu-

dents, he adds, himself included, copy papers from other students.

Despite such complaints, every three years, over two decades, the Black Studies Department nominated Jeffries for another term as chairman, and the college president and the CUNY board of trustees routinely confirmed the nomination. Any of them could have moved against Jeffries at almost any time, but no one did. Jeffries counted on academic decorum and timidity and on outright racial blackmail. "He explained that all of Harlem would rise if anyone touched a hair on his head," a math professor, Bernard Sohmer, says. "I think Marshak believed it. And Harleston was constitutionally incapable of dealing with any kind of conflict." It may be that Martin Tamny's explanation applied to everyone in a position of responsibility at City College: people had been turning a blind eye to Jeffries for so long that they could not bring themselves to confront him.

AND then Jeffries gave the speech. It was a disaster that had been waiting to happen—the public's introduction to the Leonard Jeffries that only City College knew. He had been invited, for the second year in a row, to give an address to the Empire State Black Arts and Cultural Festival, in Albany, on July 20, 1991. The Albany speech was a tasting menu of Jeffries' preoccupations: "the melanin factor" and "the factor of the ice," the slave trade, the Egyptian origin of Western civilization, the triangles inside circles. But it wasn't Jeffries' cranky racial theories that made the speech so notorious; it was his obsession with Jews. Jeffries talked about the Jews who controlled Hollywood and the Jews who had financed the slave trade and the Jews who ran the affairs of City College, and then again the Jews who had financed the slave trade. He talked about "my Jews" at City College, and he referred to Bernard Sohmer as the college's "head Jew"—a reference to what Jeffries has called a "Kabala" of Jews that runs the institution. He called Diane Ravitch, who had clearly got under his skin, "a sophisticated Texas Jew."

The speech made Jeffries New York's bogeyman du jour. Jeffrey Hart, the conservative columnist and English professor at Dartmouth, called him "an academic Tawana Brawley." The columnist



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"Gee, you didn't mention your wart in your personal."

Pete Hamill described the speech as "pure Goebbels." At first, both Harlestone and the CUNY chancellor, W. Ann Reynolds, had reacted mildly, but soon the calls for Jeffries' resignation became deafening. Governor Mario Cuomo called on CUNY to see what form of punishment for Jeffries it could legally devise. Other lawmakers, including Senator Alfonse D'Amato, dispensed with the formalities and demanded Jeffries' resignation as chairman.

As a public university, CUNY has a special vulnerability to problems of image. New York State was spending more than five hundred million dollars that year on CUNY, but the figure had been declining for three years. CUNY did not have a great many friends in the New York State Legislature, and Reynolds understood that if she let the latest Jeffries episode pass, as previous ones had, she would be giving critics a perfect excuse to continue whittling away at CUNY's budget. Suddenly galvanized, she issued a statement saying that she was "shocked and deeply disturbed" by the speech. Harlestone called the speech "a clear statement of bigotry and anti-

Semitism," and announced a "thorough review" of Jeffries' status as chairman.

At the trial, CUNY conceded that it would not have been prodded into action if not for the Albany speech, but maintained that what forced the college's hand was not the speech itself but Jeffries' volatility and his neglect of the department *after* he gave the speech. (This was a critical distinction, since, as a public employee, Jeffries could not be punished for exercising his First Amendment rights.) In mid-November, for example, when Dean Rosen and Provost Robert Pfeffer asked Jeffries to step down voluntarily, he launched into a tirade, predicting that his dismissal would provoke violence that would "make Crown Heights"—where blacks and Hasidic Jews had squared off that summer—"pale in comparison." A reporter for the Harvard *Crimson*, who had come to interview him, claimed that Jeffries threatened to have him killed; Jeffries denied the charge. Clearly, he was feeling beleaguered, even paranoid; people who had known him for years felt that he was being driven into a corner by the barrage of criticism. But

Jeffries' behavior in the fall of 1991 was not very different from his behavior in years past. At the trial, Jeffries cited an evaluation from that fall which concluded that he was satisfying his obligations as chairman. It was the speech, not the behavior, that got him fired, Jeffries argued.

In late October, Bernard Harlestone thought he had hit on a peaceful solution. Rather than dismiss Jeffries outright, he persuaded the CUNY board of trustees to offer Jeffries a one-year term as chairman rather than the normal three-year term. In theory, this was to permit further investigation, but by the end of the year Harlestone had begun searching for a replacement. It was not a job that distinguished black scholars were eager, or even willing, to take. In early February of 1992, Harlestone turned to Gordon, whom he had known for forty years, and who had acted as his adviser since 1984.

There was no good reason for Gordon to take a job that sensible, and younger, men had declined. He was seventy-one, retired from Yale, and his career had just been capped with a Festschrift organized by his former students. Many of his friends told him that he risked being seen as an instrument in a vendetta against an outspoken black man. His wife and children opposed his taking the job. But Gordon accepted it anyway. He felt a deep sense of responsibility to Harlestone, who had been a target of withering criticism for his handling of Jeffries. And the offer appealed to Gordon's sense of mission. He had devoted his life to advancing black causes and black scholarship, and he worried that the intellectual standards he had grown up with were losing their force. Affirmative action, he thought, "has let too many of us get away with less than our best work." And the oppositional element of black culture was working to undermine intellectual achievement itself. "What really concerns me," Gordon said soon after assuming the chairmanship, last summer, "is the department's anti-intellectualism,

which speaks to an anti-intellectualism in the black community."

Harlem did not rise, or even stir faintly, when Gordon began his two-year term, on July 1st. Still, he did not get off to an auspicious start. Jeffries had initially agreed to accept a one-year sabbatical and then changed his mind. What's more, he refused to leave his office. Nobody else with an office in the department was willing to make room for Gordon, so for several months he worked out of a room in the Administration Building. One afternoon in the early fall, I walked into the Black Studies office and was surprised to see him running the department from a chair next to the secretary's desk.

Gordon had large plans for building up the department. He had been promised three new teaching positions. He wanted to offer a distinguished professorship to a big name, in order to give the department instant credibility. Various stars of African-American scholarship turned him down, but Gordon succeeded in persuading Gloria Watkins, a feminist scholar who writes under the name bell hooks, to come to City. He planned to develop a CUNY-wide graduate program, not in black studies but in intercultural studies, and to form a research body, which he had tactfully named the Du Bois-Diop-James Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean. (C. L. R. James was a renowned Trinidadian scholar.) Gordon was eager to move ahead, and he presented his plans to the department's executive committee. But the department had fixed on a plan of noncooperation; nothing could be discussed until the Jeffries lawsuit was resolved. A number of faculty members, including Amoda and another Black Studies professor, Kamuti Kiteme, maintained cordial relations with Gordon, and sometimes hinted at more. But, whatever anyone's private sympathies might be, no member of the department was going to risk being seen as a Gordon supporter.

If faculty members were polite but remote with Gordon, the students were often hostile to him. When Gordon put a sign-up sheet on his door, someone scrawled on it, "Get out motherfucker." That seemed to be the general attitude. One day, Gordon offered his hand to Brother Steve, who was usually stationed

at a desk in the department, but the hand was ignored. Gordon talked of wanting to "reach out to the students," but he didn't quite know how. He was thinking about calling a public meeting but said, "I don't think it will do much good if it simply attracts Len's followers. They would just heap abuse." A younger man or a more aggressive one might have accepted the need for confrontation, and made a name for himself among students who had given up on the department. But that wasn't Gordon's way.

THIS spring, Gordon taught two seminars and also took on more than a dozen students for independent-study projects. I made a point of regularly attending a two-and-a-half-hour class called "The Psychosocial Development of the African-American Male." Gordon is the very picture of an Ivy League professor, with raffish touches that date from the early seventies. He is a flyweight of a man who wears a neatly trimmed beard and a beret and Birkenstocks. He always wears a tie, but his ties never seem to reach more than halfway down his yellow shirts. The over-all effect he produces is grandfatherly—a gentleman of the old school, fusty, faintly absent-minded, and deeply courteous. Gordon has hearing aids in both ears, and when the class abandoned itself to digression, as it often did, he would sometimes sit back and let the noise wash over him.

The actual content of the class discussion seemed less important to Gordon than the way it was conducted. Once, he interrupted a long-winded anecdote by saying, "You're making much too sloppy a statement." He often translated loose comments into the rigorous terms used by social scientists, and encouraged the students to do the same. "Perhaps," he said one day, "you might frame your opinions with reference to other people's work; i.e., 'This is the same point that William Julius Wilson made in his work 'The Declining Significance of Race,' but I want to give it a twist.'" This was Gordon's form of consciousness-raising—what he called academic socialization.

It was hard to imagine a world further removed from Leonard Jeffries' spellbinding oratory, but a number of students in the class said that they liked

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both men. In the cafeteria, one young woman (most students asked that I use neither their first nor their last names) said, "I think that Gordon is better in terms of academics, but Jeffries is better in terms of values." In fact, she said, she was going to drop the Gordon class. "I thought it would be a good class because I'd get a chance to really express myself on racism." Gordon struck her as phlegmatic and reserved. Worse, one day he had said, "I fear that I gave up a good deal of my blackness in the course of moving into a mixed world." He had added that fortunately "my children dragged me back into my black identity," but the student hadn't heard the last part; she had been scandalized. "My feeling is that if you have your identity, that's sacred," she said. Anyway, Gordon was assigning way too much work.

As time went on, it became painfully clear that Gordon was going miles over the students' heads. I had thought that he might attract some of City's better students, who normally shun Black Studies classes, but most of the students who came were part of City's great middle, and shared its attitudes and its experiences. Four of them, Gordon thought, were "Jeffries-ites." After about a month of coursework, Gordon asked the students to discuss a series of short readings he had assigned—studies of black male self-image and cultural styles. The answers were so halting and sparse,

and so devoid of interpretation, that Gordon began to explain the difference between mere literacy and critical reading. It was a painful, awkward moment.

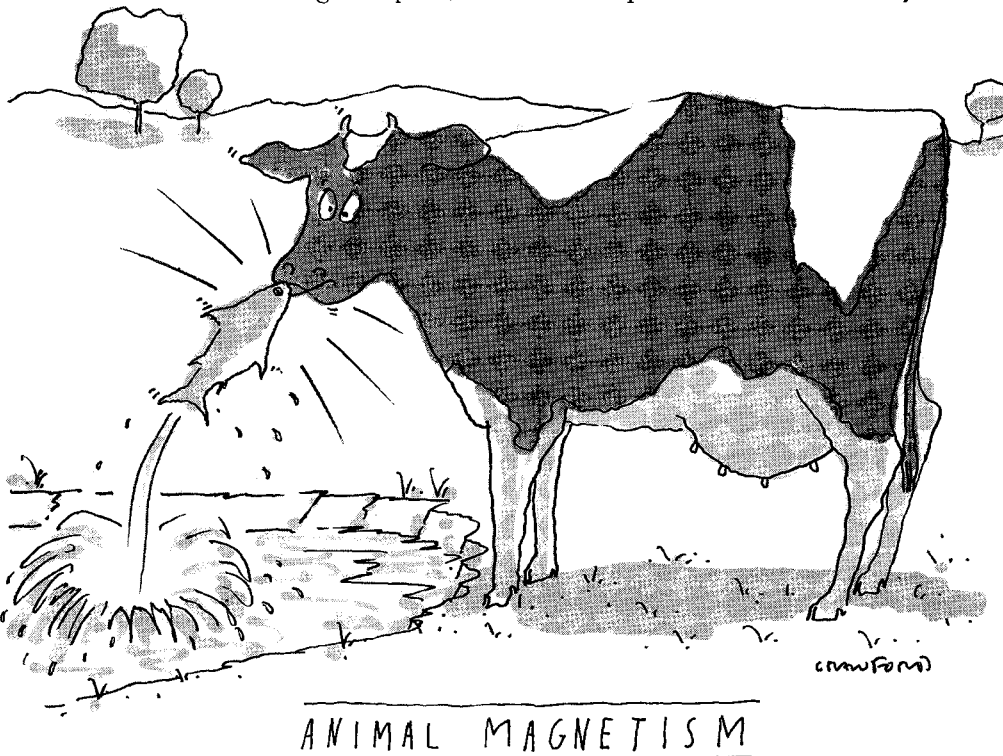
Then something strange happened: the conversation somehow turned to the way guns and drugs plague the ghetto. A Trinidadian student, a quick-witted and glib young man, said to Gordon, "Don't you think it's deliberate? If *they* didn't want drugs to come in, they wouldn't." Someone seconded that view, and now the class was off and running. An argument broke out over whether "capitalism supersedes national interest" or the other way around. Students who had been timid a few minutes before were shouting. "Why are white people so powerful?" the young man asked. "Debt financing." A woman sitting next to Gordon began talking about the New World Order; it was, as she understood it, the name for a global conspiracy. "There's a book called 'The Unseen Hand,'" she said. "Everything is falling into place. And now they have an elite group that's going to rule the world." Gordon talked about the civil-rights movement, the need for political engagement, careful analysis, honest leadership. The conversation paused, and then rolled on. I looked at the notebook of the woman next to me; it was full of circles and triangles. The class had the quality of a failed exorcism.

When I spoke to Gordon a few days

later, he was as smoothly cheerful as ever, but he was obviously distressed. "Not only have these students not learned to read for critical information but the level of actual absorption is not very high," he said. "I don't know how much the faculty in general worries about this; I know that it's not a concern of the Black Studies Department." Gordon often came back to this subject; he assumed that a department focussed on the situation of black people had a special obligation to help develop black students. "I don't want to sound arrogant," he said, "but this serves to remind me how much people like me are needed here."

I asked if he had been surprised by the talk of "The Unseen Hand" and global conspiracy. He paused for a moment—Gordon is forever tinkering with his assertions, not so much out of caution as for the sake of exactitude—and then said, "I had not realized the extent to which both the faculty and students had kind of bought into a dogma." When I put the same question to Irving Hamer, who was the co-teacher of Gordon's other seminar, I got a much more categorical answer. "When you spend time in a classroom you see the depth and the breadth of the contamination," he said. "Part of it would be tolerable if the students weren't so badly prepared. These students are going to go out into the world, and they're not going to be able to make a contribution. Jeffries has been too successful at this trash stuff. And it's too late to fix it."

At the end of the spring term, a few weeks before Leonard Jeffries won his case and, apparently, his job, Edmund Gordon finally decided to meet with students in an open forum. In keeping with his entire tenure as chairman, the scene had an element of incongruity that verged on the surreal. He looked tiny and prim and extremely isolated as he sat at the front of a steeply raked auditorium in City's North Academic Center. The evening was conducted in the form of a quiz show. Brother Ozzie, from the Statewide Africana Studies Movement, asked Gordon a series of ques-



ANIMAL MAGNETISM

tions, several of which mirrored the text of "Ten Good Reasons Why Edmund Gordon Must Resign." "What is your qualification to be chairman of Black Studies?" Ozzie asked, adding that he really wanted to know about Gordon's knowledge of Africa. Gordon thanked Ozzie for having invited him to speak, quickly admitted that he did not possess "tremendous knowledge" of Africa, but added that since "Professor Jeffries is a prominent Africanist . . . with our two strengths we could make this an excellent program."

The questions became increasingly inquisitorial. Question No. 8 was "Could you tell us the name of some of the slave forts and dungeons in Africa?" Several of the students around me snickered. Gordon, incredibly, named a slave fort—or perhaps a dungeon—before asking, "Is that leading somewhere?" But it led only to the next question: Aren't you too old to run a department? A young woman near me whom I knew from one of Gordon's seminars said, "This is so tacky." But Gordon answered that one, too, assuring the audience that he was not yet senile. Brother Ozzie's final comment was "Many people are concerned about your interracial marriage to a white Jewish woman." A groan went up from parts of the audience, and Brother Ozzie added, "This is a very sensitive question."

"I certainly agree," Gordon said. "It's sensitive and none of your business." Several members of the audience pounded on their desks in a show of support, but Gordon was unwilling to gain a few students at the cost of alienating others. He then spoke proudly of his wife, Susan, a retired pediatrician (who in fact is not Jewish), and of his children and grandchildren.

The tone of the evening became more abusive when audience members were afforded an opportunity to question Gordon. He gave long, thoughtful answers even to the most tendentious questions, and he managed to convey the impression that he and Leonard Jeffries were occupying the same piece of ground: "My problem with Professor Jeffries' speech has much more to do with style than substance." He called the department Africana Studies, a coinage to which both he and the college object. (Members of the department use it anyway.) In short, he went as far toward

Jeffries and his followers as he could without forsaking his own integrity.

Gordon's display of stoicism was, in its own way, masterly, and I was later told that Brother Ozzie had felt bested. Perhaps Gordon had made himself less of an enemy and a stranger to the students. Or perhaps he was demonstrating the limits of diplomacy in the face of an implacable foe. Earlier in the spring, Jeffries had told a conference that Gordon and the new members of the faculty were bent on turning students into "small-'n' negroes." How well could diplomacy fare against such diatribes?

MICHELE WALLACE, the black feminist and English professor, thinks that Gordon has made a serious miscalculation. Wallace got her bachelor's degree from City during the first years of open admissions; her mother, the artist Faith Ringgold, had also graduated from City, and she grew up only a few blocks from the campus. She identifies with the school with the same intensity, the same sense of its ideals and large purposes, that the working-class Jews of the nineteen-twenties and thirties and forties felt. And she considers Leonard Jeffries a profound threat to those ideals. She considers him a frightening figure: she goes as far as to compare him to David Koresh. "There *should* be an antagonism between Ed Gordon and Leonard Jeffries," she says. "Leonard Jeffries is not rational. It's not possible to absorb sun people and ice people into a rational view. My view of Leonard Jeffries is that he's a maniac—and you can't assimilate a maniac. Jeffries should be marginalized. But Ed Gordon is too much of a gentleman, an Ivy League gentleman, to understand that."

Wallace is not comfortable airing her views of Jeffries. She's all too familiar with the tradition in the black community—and in most communities—of not criticizing your own in front of strangers (a tradition that Jeffries, she believes, has profited greatly by). Yet the fact that Jeffries has become a hero to many students—and, for that matter, to her own grandmother—is intolerable to her. "A lot of students are confused," she says. "They don't understand the difference between Edmund Gordon and Leonard Jeffries. And I think a number of us need to take on this task if black studies is ever going to be a serious area." ♦

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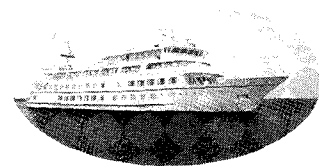
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there is still time for lifelong memories of a track well travelled.*

BY PHILIP HAMBURGER

VISITING in Washington. Came home on Amtrak's sleek new Swedish-built, high-speed tilt train, X2000, which cuts minutes from regular running time between capital and Big Apple. First step toward President's goal of high-speed rail travel. Fast or slow, I love trains: no manic airports, no twisted seat belts. Room to sit back, look out, not down, at Mother Earth, reflect on lifelong traversal of same route. Up at dawn to catch 6:50 A.M. train, No. 202. Washington like small town—eerily quiet, still snoozing. Passed White House, gray in dawn. Flag flying from roof. Residential second floor completely dark—no Bill, Hillary, Chelsea, cat. Union Station almost deserted. Onto train at 6:43 and into spacious, elegantly appointed coach. (Ninety dollars one way, a hundred and eighty round trip.) Soft blue seats, pull-down teak-like desks at each one, attractive beige carpeting with rust-colored squares. Coffee bar in middle of car: on the house. Car almost filled with dignified, highly professional-looking men and women, many already with spread-out papers, laptop computers. People smiling reservedly at one another. This no Love Boat. Digital clock in front of car read 6:50. Without fuss, feathers, jiggling, or sound, we were gliding out of station right on time.

Almost instantly, attendant came by. Did I want breakfast at seat, she asked, or prefer bistro car—fancier stuff? Said I'd sit tight. Attendant fount of information, proud to be part of test run of train. Told me train had been rented

for eight months from Swedish owners. Said, "We're zipping along now at a hundred and thirty-five miles per hour. We pay extra attention to curves. Curves are *important*. Ordinarily, you take a curve or you leave a curve alone, but where regular trains take curves at a hundred and ten miles per hour, X2000 goes

around at a hundred and twenty-five. Or takes a ninety-mile-per-hour curve at a hundred and fifteen, or a hundred-and-five at a hundred and twenty-five, or a hundred-and-ten at a hundred and thirty-five."

Docent momentarily interrupted by tinkle of loud-speaker system, followed by voice

announcing train would make only stop of entire trip: New Carrollton, Maryland, 6:59—gentle stop, gentle start.

"Highly technical, this business of curves," attendant went on. "On regular trains, cars have rigid axles, so when the train goes around a curve, the axles remain rigidly parallel. The higher the speed, the more the tendency of wheels to overrun the rails. That won't do. The X2000 axles are computerized, and assume their natural radial position on each curve, redistributing and minimizing forces exerted by rigid frames. Am I spoiling your appetite?"

"Not at all," I said.

"This means," she said, "that an X2000 undercarriage might exert barely more force taking a curve at a hundred and fifteen miles per hour than a regular train at eighty miles per hour. Also, we have a complicated tilting system: X2000 tilts at the proper angle and time as we take a curve. If we tilted a hundred per cent of the curve, people might



feel uncomfortable. So we settle on a seventy-per-cent tilt, and people aren't confused by changing horizon line."

Clock said 7:15. Obviously, time to eat. Attendant brought tray to seat. Yummies included orange slices, hard-boiled-egg slices, raspberry preserve, prune Danish, croissant, grapes, coffee. No charge. Top of coffee cup still as millpond. Sliding non-stop through Baltimore: 7:21.

Familiar city. Father born here. Can't say I miss stopping at quondam Pennsylvania Railroad's Union Station. Always preferred romantic Renaissance Baltimore & Ohio Mount Royal station, furnished with rocking chairs. Rocking chairs! In old days, Mount Royal pure Manet painting: great shed, clouds of smoke from steam locomotives. I spot Maryland Institute, massive old Belvedere Hotel. Tunnel, then East Baltimore. Almost deserted streets, legendary row houses, spotless white marble steps. Catch glimpse of dome of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Almost lost precious friend years ago; saved by brilliant medicine at Hopkins, medical team led by my uncle (who was, incidentally, in first class at Hopkins Medical School). Constant vigil, loving care. "It's touch and go," uncle said to me. "Be strong, be prepared. As Osler would say, Aequanimitas." Grant E. Ward, renowned surgeon, operated: gentle medical wizard had suffered spinal tumor; arm, paralyzed, swung in terrifying rotating shoulder brace, but hand precise as arrow. For private nurse, uncle snared noted Hopkins figure who had been head nurse for famed neurosurgeon Harvey Cushing in First World War. I tried to distract patient by sitting at bedside, relating how uncle had taken me, as young man, to Marlborough Apartments, on Eutaw Place, to view great collection of Dr. Claribel and Miss Etta Cone, still on private walls, prior to donation to Baltimore Museum of Art. Picasso, van Gogh, Cézanne. But Matisse the true treasures—single largest Matisse collection in United States. Said, "When you get well, we'll go to the museum and see them." "I'll get well," she said. And did.

Reverie broken. Conductor wanted ticket. "Anybody tell you about the curves?" he said. I said yes. "Anybody tell you we make a constant examination of these tracks before and after X2000 passes over them? Try our fancy john."

John super. Locks automatically

when door closes. For soap, press white button over sink. For water, press red button. Back to seat. Attendant passing out elaborate questionnaires. Queasy feeling. Reminded of College Boards. Sample: "What day of the week is it? What percentage of your total leisure or non-business trips . . ." Abandoned questionnaire, observed soft Maryland countryside slipping past. Strikingly high bridge over Susquehanna: on left, whole vast interior of continent; on right, waterway to Chesapeake Bay and Old World. Never cross this bridge without thinking of Havre de Grace and immortal lines from "Guys and Dolls" that go something like:

COP: What's the name of that place in Maryland where people get married in a hurry?

GAMBLER: Pimlico.

Delaware whizzing past. Dozed for a blink, Delaware come and gone. Looked out window, reflected on sobering visit day before in Washington with veteran diplomat, retired foreign ambassador. "The struggle in Russia is philosophically between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, between Dostoyevski and Turgenev, between East and West," he said. "Russia is a wounded animal. Losing Ukraine was a humiliating loss. Some of those Harvard economists giving advice had better be careful—Russia is not a Third World country but a highly developed one that's tragically run down. And, remember, you can't suddenly tell a Socialist country that it must suffer unemployment of thirty million."

Philadelphia: 8:19. One hour twenty-nine minutes. Usual time, one hour thirty-six minutes. Told self progress is slow, can't expect miracles.

Philadelphia jumble of thoughts. Remember torrid, steaming night in 1948, Democratic Convention prepared to nominate Harry Truman. I'm high up in balcony. Truman kept waiting interminably on ramp outside stage entrance while Southern segregationists ranted, stormed out of hall. Rousing pro-Truman speech by firebrand mayor of Minneapolis, Hubert Humphrey. Truman finally nominated, delivered impassioned stem-winder, sawing air with familiar parallel gesture of both hands. Convention adjourned in wee hours. No cabs, long walk to station. Now passing sand-colored Philadelphia Museum of Art. Quirky reminder of American

painter Edwin Dickinson. Knew him on Cape Cod, recalled seeing above his mantelpiece palette from his early classes at Pratt with William Merritt Chase. Remember dreamlike visit one morning to Philadelphia Museum: I turn corner, bump into Dickinson—perfect self-portrait, hanging on wall. Now, passing boathouses on Schuylkill, in mind's eye see Eakins' scullers on this river.

Cross Delaware at Trenton: 8:45. Been travelling one hour fifty-five minutes. Usual time, two hours twenty minutes. Sign on bridge reads, "Trenton Makes—The World Takes." From dreary scene whizzing past, find this doubtful. Heart of industrial East now: abandoned factories, broken windows, run-down infrastructure, crying for help. Suddenly, remember passing Red Lobster restaurant earlier on this trip. Night after night, on tube, watch vivid ads of crustaceans bubbling in butter, see platters of succulent shrimp, but never find Red Lobster on home turf. Hurry to front of car, insert credit card in phone, call home to wife:

ME: I've actually seen a Red Lobster!

SHE: Big news in a troubled world. Say hello for me.

Newark: 9:11. Usual time, two hours thirty-six minutes; this train, two hours twenty-one minutes. Spotted twin towers of World Trade Center, top of Empire State. Zoomed into tunnel under Hudson. Sudden recollection of Arthur Train's famous Mr. Tutt, consummate fictional lawyer, and story about big lawsuit involving train stuck in tunnel: New York jurisdiction or New Jersey jurisdiction?

Loudspeaker: "In approximately three minutes, we will be arriving at Pennsylvania Station, New York City. Thank you for riding Amtrak's X2000. And have a goo-ood day!"

Precisely on time: 9:25. Two hours thirty-five minutes, against two hours fifty-five minutes.

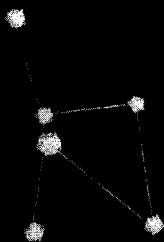
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In prepared testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Reno also pledged strong civil rights enforcement and added: "I want to do everything I can to endure equal opportunities for all Americans."—*The Latest News*, a bulletin distributed on airlines.

Something Ed Meese was never really comfortable with, either.



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LIFE AND LETTERS

GROUP ENCOUNTER

Vassar is no longer the school Mary McCarthy knew, but it is indelibly associated with her explosive novel—as are her classmates, now celebrating their sixtieth reunion.

BY FRANCES KIERNAN

AT Vassar next Friday, returning members of the Class of '33 will sit down to dinner at sixty in the red brick quadrangle dormitory, where they are staying for the weekend. This will be their sixtieth college reunion, and in all likelihood it is the last big reunion that most of them will celebrate. There will be no outsiders. No reporters or writers. At eighty years old, a class officer instrumental in the planning says, they have earned the right to have things the way they want them. They want to keep their reunion private. Thanks to a former classmate and her best-selling novel, for the past thirty years they have had more than their fill of publicity. This time, they don't want to hear about Mary McCarthy. Above all, they don't want to talk about her.

With its gracious old trees and green lawns, Vassar in early June seems like a picture-book school. Because it has been careful to tuck just about every modern addition behind a stately older building, the college looks at first glance much as it must have looked sixty years ago, when it was recognized as the finest women's college in the country. On closer inspection, you see that there are young men everywhere, not only on the lawns but in the library and the dormitories. At Commencement, ten sophomore men dressed in blazers and white trousers accompany the traditional Daisy Chain—a specially

chosen double column of white-clad sophomore women bearing ropes of cut daisies on their shoulders and leading the procession of graduating seniors. Vassar has been educating men since 1969.

Like all colleges, Vassar has had to change with the times. Sixty per cent of its students receive some kind of finan-

cial aid. There are blacks and Asians, and many more Jews than there used to be. The student body would not look out of place at Berkeley or Irvine. Even in winter, you see more denim than tweed. Only rarely will you see a young woman in a Brooks sweater and pearls, and when you do she is likely to be a member of the faculty. Some of the young men have hair to their shoulders or pulled back in a ponytail. These days, you don't find many students stabling a horse off campus or joining a local hunt or slipping off



McCarthy in the 1933 yearbook. Perhaps, one classmate ventured, she was "out to get the Group itself for some long-forgotten crimes against her ego."

at the holiday season to be presented to polite society at a small tea or dinner dance. The dormitories no longer have their own dining rooms. Meals are taken at the All College Dining Center, where there are no waitresses or table linens: service is cafeteria style.

One college reunion is pretty much like another, but for its sixtieth reunion the Class of '33 is making a point of keeping things as quiet as possible. When the members aren't scheduled to join other classes for the president's talk in the Chapel, or for lunch at the Field

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House, they are hoping to enjoy some peaceful moments together. There are old photographs they want to look over, things they wish to discuss. For those of the class who are able to make it, the weekend will be bittersweet. Friends they have looked forward to seeing have been forced to stay home, either because of illness or because, for one reason or another, they are having difficulty getting around. In the ten years since their last big reunion, forty-eight members of the class have died.

The only works by Mary McCarthy that the majority of her former Vassar classmates speak of with any enthusiasm are her two books about Italy. They find her "Memories of a Catholic Girlhood" depressing—especially when it describes the brutal treatment she received as an orphan at the hands of her aunt and uncle. They are shocked by some of the stories in "The Company She Keeps," and her short satirical novels are not really to their taste. When it comes to "The Group," her best-selling novel, which follows the adventures of eight Vassar girls from their graduation, in 1933, to the start of the Second World War, the response can be violent. More than a few of her classmates simply wish that she had never written it. The book, which came out in August of 1963, left them feeling both exposed and violated, and they feel that way even now.

In 1983, for their fiftieth reunion, Mary McCarthy, despite strong objections, was finally invited to speak at the big Saturday-night dinner at Alumnae House. Another class member, Lucille Fletcher Wallop, was also asked to speak. In the end, McCarthy came late, and her speech was disorganized—not nearly as good as the one Lucille Fletcher Wallop gave. Having seen McCarthy's picture in magazines and newspapers, her classmates were not surprised by the changes in her appearance, but later, when they went up to speak to her, they sometimes found that she was taken aback by the way *they* looked. All in all, the dinner was not a success.

In October of 1989, Mary McCarthy died of lung cancer. In the spring of 1992, the second volume of her memoirs was published posthumously. Last fall, Carol Brightman's big biography of her was published. It has been difficult for her classmates to ignore her. Back when they were in college, most of them were

hardly aware of Mary McCarthy. If they noticed her at all, they didn't spend much time thinking about her. She was not a class leader, nor was she an editor on any of the official school publications. To many, she was just a tall, skinny girl from Seattle with straight black hair, which sometimes needed washing, and lovely green eyes. Some felt she had a Cheshire-cat grin. A couple thought she was good-looking. One says now that she looked like Charles Addams' Morticia. But when her best friend, Frani Blough, cast her as the Madonna in a Christmas tableau it was agreed that she was absolutely beautiful.

She could be sharp in her comments in class, and if she didn't care for you she could be abrupt. Teachers thought she was brilliant. If you had any hope of being a writer yourself, her efforts in class took the wind right out of your sails. Lucille Fletcher Wallop says, "I learned from her short stories that devilled ham was fatal to a proper orgasm and that lettuce was a powerful aphrodisiac." If you were in her dormitory freshman year, and shared the same bathroom, she would tell you about the older actor she was sleeping with in New York or lecture you on douching. In her sophomore year, she was not chosen for the Daisy Chain.

MARY MCCARTHY was by no means the first Vassar student to go on to make a name for herself as a writer. In the class of 1917, there had been Edna St. Vincent Millay. Immediately behind McCarthy, in the class of '34, there was Elizabeth Bishop, recognized as one of the great poets of this century, and also Muriel Rukeyser and Eleanor Clark. Indeed, McCarthy was not the only successful writer her own class could boast of. Lucille Fletcher Wallop wrote the radio play and the film script of "Sorry, Wrong Number." All the same, thanks to "The Group," McCarthy and Vassar have remained linked, stuck together for what looks to be eternity.

While "The Group" was not Mary McCarthy's best novel, or even her most ambitious, it was the one that made her famous. It stayed on the best-seller lists for almost two years, going on to become a big-budget motion picture, and selling more than five million copies in twenty-four countries by 1991. To a small coterie of readers, though, McCarthy had been well known for more

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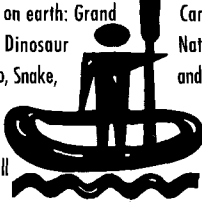
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than two decades. Feared as much as she was admired, she was renowned for her beauty, the sharpness of her tongue, and her willingness to tell the truth at all costs. She was also renowned for having had four husbands, among them the eminent critic Edmund Wilson, and more lovers than you could count. During the thirties, she was part of the anti-Stalinist left, though she never actually became a Trotskyite. When "The Group" came out, she was calling herself a "dissident" who believed in "a kind of libertarian socialism." In the jacket photograph, she was shown standing against a Paris skyline, her back ramrod straight, her hair pulled into a bun, her classic profile and strong jawline unblunted by time.

McCarthy's first novel, "The Company She Keeps," caused a sensation with its sexual candor. But most critics regarded her fiction as less successful than her essays. She brought to her stories and novels a literalness they saw as wrong-headed. In her fiction she was known to draw upon real-life figures—former lovers, old friends, and mere acquaintances. After "The Oasis" came out, Philip Rahv, a co-founder of *Partisan Review* and a former lover of McCarthy's, almost sued her, because he was immediately recognizable as Will Taub, the most mean-spirited and arrogant character in the book. Some critics felt that she didn't borrow from life out of malice; she couldn't write fiction any other way, they said, deploring her lack of imagination. But until 1963 her fiction rarely strayed from a narrow circle of New York intellectuals or Wellfleet artists, accustomed to, if not always pleased by, the rough give-and-take of literary life.

With "The Group," McCarthy extended her fictional reach as well as her audience, and became an international celebrity. The book was banned in Italy, Ireland, and Australia. The sexual explicitness of the second and third chapters was shocking, even to those familiar with her writing, and no doubt this accounted for a good deal of the novel's success. It was the kind of book—along with "Lady Chatterley's Lover" and "79 Park Avenue"—that high-school teachers delighted in confiscating. As one wit put it, "That woman has done for the pessary what Herman Melville did for the whale."

McCarthy did not write "The

Group" to make a lot of money. She wrote it in dead earnest, and it took her eleven years. In a 1962 *Paris Review* interview, trying to explain why she was finding it such tough going, she concluded, "These girls are all essentially comic figures, and it's awfully hard to make anything happen to them." Later, when the book was out, she ascribed the delay to pangs of conscience. She felt bad, she said, "whacking those girls over the head and making them parrot this terrible nonsense." In the end, the pangs did not seem to stop her. At least four of the eight girls in the novel fare badly—at the hands of a husband or a lover or at the hands of their implacable creator. If Polly Andrews and Helena Davison are in many respects admirable characters, they are a little too nice to stick in a reader's mind. It is Kay Strong, with her transparent pretensions, or Dottie Renfrew, with her failed love affair, whom you remember. A couple of the girls—Libby MacAusland, a would-be book editor, and Pokey Prothero, flying her private plane to Cornell to study veterinary medicine—seem downright silly. The

most glamorous of the lot, Elinor Eastlake, or Lakey, turns out to be a lesbian.

To her *Paris Review* interviewer McCarthy explained how she set about writing a piece of fiction:

"What I really do is take real plums and put them in an imaginary cake. If you're interested in the cake, you get rather annoyed with people saying what species the real plum was." Upon publication of "The Group," many of the plums and their friends, unaccustomed to such rough handling, took violent issue with what she had done. There was talk of legal action. While the rest of the world assumed that McCarthy's classmates were outraged because the book's sexual explicitness reflected badly on the class and on Vassar, they were in fact upset because they felt that they and their friends had been held up to public ridicule. Some went as far as to use the word "betrayal."

A handful of McCarthy's classmates spoke to a reporter for the New York *Herald Tribune*. Careful to conceal the real names of close friends portrayed in the novel, and holding back their own names, they presented their case. Piling detail upon detail, they pointed to one character after another. The real Dottie



Renfrew would have been immediately recognizable, they said, from the long mink coat, the sciatica, and the long Boston nose. What they omitted to say was that McCarthy had not bothered to change the real Dottie's first name, and also that she hadn't changed the first name of the real Kay. Why had McCarthy done this? Perhaps, one classmate ventured, because she was "out to get the Group itself for some long-forgotten crimes against her ego."

You do not have to share these women's anger to see that some of the incidents or details McCarthy grafted onto her real-life models are sordid or belittling. Dottie Newton, known for her dignity, her humor, and her generosity, had never done any of the things Mary McCarthy attributed to her: she had never had a brief and devastating sexual encounter with a drunken artist in the Village, or bought a diaphragm that, her romantic illusions shattered, she then left under a bench in Washington Square. Helen Kellogg, the model for Pokey, "a fat cheerful New York society girl with big red cheeks and yellow hair," had never been "the problem child of the group, very rich and lazy, having to be coached in her subjects, cribbing in examinations, sneaking weekends, stealing library books, without morals or subtleties, interested only in animals and hunt dances." At Vassar, Helen Kellogg had been a philosophy major, with a great gift for mathematics and science. "Brilliant" is the way her classmates describe her—as gifted in science as Mary McCarthy had been in English. When her mother, hoping to get her to drop out of college, offered her a trip to Europe, she took her mother up on the offer, did a little extra studying, and joined her class the following term without missing a beat. After college, she married and had four children, and went on to study medicine and became a psychiatrist. Though she may have been a New York society girl, she was hardly dumb. But how were casual acquaintances reading "The Group" and recognizing not only her parents but their town house and butler to know this? And what, exactly, had Helen Kellogg done to deserve such treatment? All she had done, as far as she could see, was to share, during her senior year, a suite in the South Tower of Main Hall with Mary McCarthy and Dottie Newton and five other girls.

Not every member of the class was

outraged by "The Group." Through the worst of the uproar, old friends remained as fond of McCarthy as they had always been. And some members of the class, whose lives had never really touched McCarthy's, were pleased that the class included a famous writer. For a long while, however, even those who did not object to the book felt themselves to be notorious. To the world at large, theirs would always be the class of "The Group." Thirty years later, things have quieted down. All the same, it is hard for many, though not all, of Mary McCarthy's friends to be put in the position of having to speak up in her defense.

Julia Denison Rumsey was part of the South Tower group. In the stock-market crash her father lost all his money, and in the fall of 1932, when he could no longer pay her Vassar tuition, Mary McCarthy and Dottie Newton quietly went to the dean and asked that she be given a scholarship. "Up until then, I had a C average," she says. "Mary said to the dean that I could do better than that. I got the scholarship, and my last term I got A's. Dottie Newton I had known for years, so it was only natural that she would go to the dean. But Mary was not a close friend at the time." To Julia, McCarthy herself seemed in need of protecting—more lonely and unhappy than she ever let on. With "The Group," Julia Rumsey believes, she may have been trying to make up for the fact that she had always felt socially inferior to the debutantes in the class. "But, my goodness, she was so far ahead of the rest of us intellectually," Rumsey says. "I'll tell you one thing that's just an interesting sidelight," she adds. "In 'The Group,' all these different girls are named, and the one she calls Polly Andrews I've always thought was meant to be me. She used to call me Pollyanna. She thought I was so naïve about things."

Clover Benson Waterman, another possible model for Polly Andrews, died in February of 1989. On an outing in the fall of 1986, Dottie Newton Chace was stung by a bee, went into a coma, and never recovered. There was no Lakey in this original South Tower group, nor was there a Libby. The model for Lakey was in the class behind McCarthy's. The model for Libby lived in the North Tower of Main. The rest of the group in South Tower have gone on to outlive Mary McCarthy.

Rosilla Hornblower Hawes (said to

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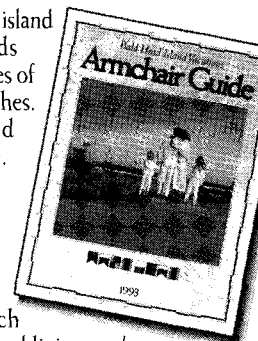
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be the model for Priss) and Helen Kellogg Edey do not attend class reunions. This year, Julia Rumsey and Kay McLean Knox will not be coming. Nor will Maddie Aldrich De Mott, who remained a friend of McCarthy's, because she enjoyed her company and was genuinely fond of her. Maddie De Mott was not a major character in the novel, but she appears as a young woman who has a dog-walking service. "It was called the Dog Trot, which I thought was quite clever," she says. "In the book Mary has it as the Dog Walk, which isn't half as good. She also has Kay wishing that her friends' parents would have the wedding at the Cosmopolitan or the Colony. Well, you don't call them that. The Colony was actually a restaurant. It was the Colony Club and the Cos Club. All these minor nuances Mary could never get right. And she could never get certain things right about people, either. She had her own concept of them and then she wrote about that."

FRANI BLOUGH MUSER, who helped organize the fiftieth reunion, and who was Mary McCarthy's best friend at Vassar, will not be sitting down to din-

ner with her classmates. She will be packing up her apartment, on the Upper East Side, by the river, and getting ready to move. A year ago, her husband, Curt, died after a long illness, and she now suffers from glaucoma. The apartment, where she used to put up Mary McCarthy and entertain Elizabeth Bishop, has become too much for her. All the same, she says, it's hard to leave. In 1938, on the day before Christmas, her wedding breakfast was held in another apartment in the same building. Mary McCarthy, nine months pregnant, nearly didn't make the breakfast, but in the end the baby held off long enough for her to take her place at the bride's table. McCarthy's husband at the time, Edmund Wilson, had to stand, with about fifty other guests, a plate in his hand. Afterward, McCarthy strolled with Wilson all the way down to Brooks Brothers, on Madison at Forty-fourth, and that night she went into labor.

Frani Blough met Mary McCarthy during freshman year, over a Bunsen burner in chemistry lab. "I wouldn't say Mary was rebellious in those days," she says. "But she knew what she wasn't interested in and what she was and the kind of people she liked and the kind of

people she didn't." Easily recognizable as Helena in "The Group," even though she was not part of the group in South Tower, Frani Muser seems happily resigned to her fate. But the worst that is ever said of Helena is that naked she could be mistaken for "a freckled little boy on his way to a swimming hole."

It has always been Frani Muser's contention that McCarthy intended no real harm with "The Group." The way she sees it, the decision to make the girls sillier than they actually were was aesthetic. "Mary doesn't go on with any of those who went into serious work," she says, "because, for one thing, they are usually working so hard right after college—getting degrees or starting out in their chosen profession—that they don't make interesting material for a book. Or very lively material. A case history would be different. But she was writing a novel. This was not a case history at all. Though I guess a lot of people read it that way."

But why did she use real people in fictional situations and not bother to change details that would identify them? "It would have been nicer if she'd called Dottie Bobbie," Frani Muser says. "But I think Mary had a naïve side. She was shocked when people like Dottie didn't like what she wrote. She was hurt when they didn't appreciate it."

It's possible that McCarthy did not find the made-up things she had her characters do quite as horrifying as their real-life models did. In fact, some of the most unpleasant details were taken from her own life. She bestowed upon Kay her own makeshift first wedding. Like Kay, she had a husband who checked her into Payne Whitney. Like Libby, she had a book editor tell her that if she wasn't a genius or starving he had no work for her. There are even recognizable elements of McCarthy in Lakey, who, after all, has most of the novel's best lines.

Why, then, the sense that Mary McCarthy was settling old scores? Why, for instance, did she choose to embarrass women whose sense of decorum left them not only vulnerable but with no means of getting back at her? It can be argued that, like many adults who have been abused as children, she had gone on to be a kind of abuser herself. This,



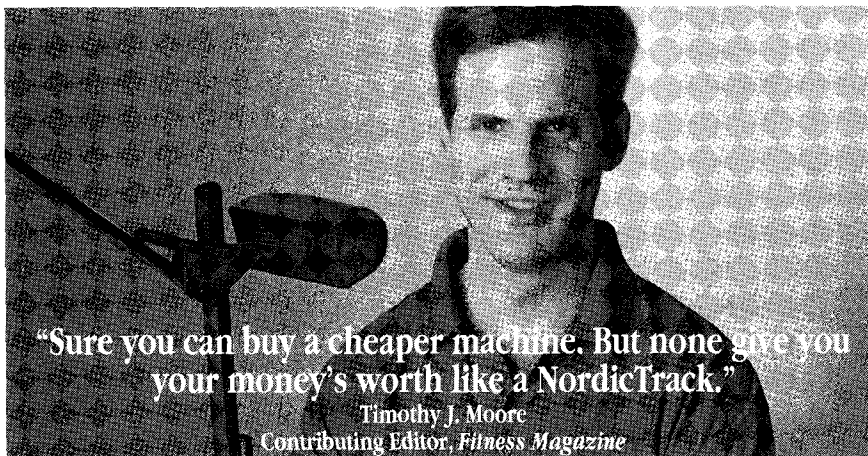
"I wonder what this was for."

of course, is an argument that McCarthy would have dismissed out of hand. She believed to the end of her life that there is such a thing as truth and that it is knowable. Such clarity of vision can be bracing. But with "The Group" you run into complications of motive that leave you dazed and reeling and reduced to agreeing with Oscar Wilde when he says, "The truth is rarely pure, and never simple."

In 1951, in an article in *Holiday*, Mary McCarthy accused the Vassar faculty and student body of being hopelessly stodgy. In the sixties, she was heard to say that if she had a daughter she would send her to Radcliffe. When Vassar began taking men, she said that it was typical of the school to embrace some modish notion about the importance of coeducation just when, with the advent of feminism, it was going out of fashion. But when Vassar's president, Virginia Smith, asked her to come back in February of 1982 for a week as the school's first Distinguished Visitor, she accepted at once.

By 1985, when McCarthy sold her papers to Vassar, to be part of its Special Collections, she seemed to have finally made peace with her old school. Seated on a bench, with the Gothic façade of Thompson Library behind her, as she talked to a reporter from CBS News, she looked like just another handsome white-haired old lady—that is, until her eyes crinkled shut and she grinned. "I'm very fond of Vassar, even when I've been on the outs with Vassar," she said to the reporter. "I'm very fond of the place, and let's say I'm fond of, and amused by, the idea of the Vassar girl of all ages, because all are recognizable to me."

McCarthy could be reckless, but she was never boring. When the reporter asked what she thought distinguished Vassar girls, she replied, "Well, their desire to be superior—superior to others, superior to their community. There is a certain daringness, sometimes simply a wish to be daring and sometimes the reality, because they're not all that way. And, on the positive side, I think they are very well educated on the whole. I mean, you can't educate everybody. I'm exposed to some Smith women, and it makes one appreciate a Vassar education, as the things and people that a Smith graduate has never heard of are very shocking to a Vassar girl." ♦



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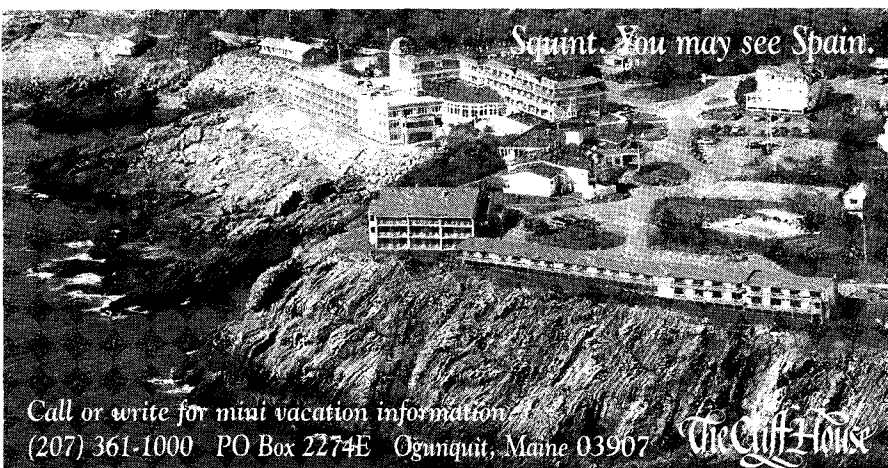
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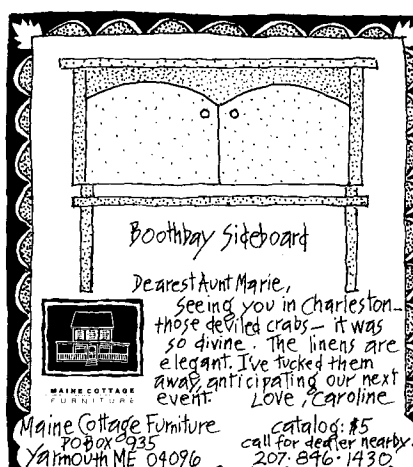


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A REPORTER AT LARGE

UNHOLY ACTS

The Catholic Church's failure to confront the crisis within its clergy—more than four hundred priests have been accused of sexual misconduct with children in recent years—has begun to cripple its authority among believers. At a small parish in Massachusetts, parents have been forced to confront a pastor's abuse of their faith.

BY PAUL WILKES

ON a Sunday morning a year ago last January, the congregants of my church—St. Augustine's Mission, a tiny Catholic church in the central Massachusetts town of Wheelwright—looked up to see an unfamiliar priest at the altar. Nothing was said about our pastor, Father Ronald Provost, by this stranger in white alb and green stole; the Mass went on, as we were taught that it should, regardless of the celebrant. We received Communion, said our thanksgiving, and went downstairs to the hall for coffee and doughnuts. There were some whispers of curiosity about where Father Provost was that morning, but in such a small parish we were not going to ask anyone directly; and, whatever the reason for Father Provost's absence, we knew we were lucky to have a priest at all in these days of an ever-shrinking clergy and a growing number of church closings. After greeting us at the back of the church, the visiting priest, who identified himself as Father Rocco Piccolomini, the diocesan vicar for priests, had quickly left.

Around us, on walls and ledges, in the cheerful panelled basement room were many framed pictures of our parish children: at our annual chicken barbecue; in their First Communion clothes; playing games; running a race. Father Provost, who had been our parish priest since 1988, was always taking pictures and handing out extra copies to the subjects. Also on the wall was his own picture, with our thanks recorded beneath it. Two years before, the room

where we were standing had been no more than a dank crawl space. With volunteer labor and scraped-up funds, he had excavated and constructed. His efforts had afforded us a place to gather after Mass and get to know one another.

We parishioners of St. Augustine's—our usual Sunday group consisted of about a hundred adults—were grateful to Fa-

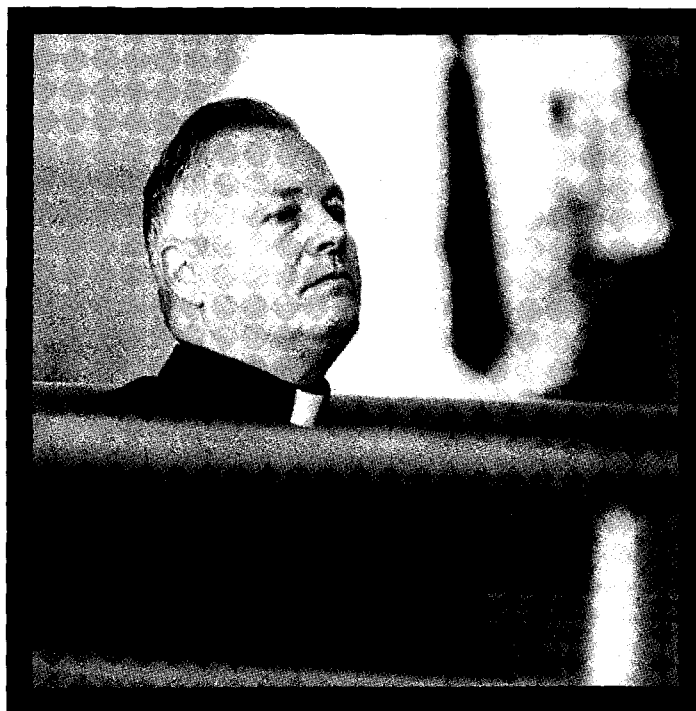
culty carrying on a conversation with a grownup. There was a childlike quality about him that seemed to preclude adults' having a serious relationship with him. But he was sweet, simple, smiling, hard-working, and beloved by the children, and he seemed to be doing the best he could with what limited abilities he had. He was interested in kids, and was always

organizing trips to amusement parks and swimming pools, assembling teams for flag football and street hockey, and sponsoring nights dedicated to baseball-card exchanges.

On the Sunday mornings that followed, a series of priests unknown to us came to say Mass at our church. None of them gave us any information about our pastor, but one let it be known that if we wanted to write to him our letters would be forwarded. Early in the period of Father Provost's absence, I called the auxiliary bishop, whom I knew, to ask after him. He told me, "We had to get him out of there quickly, put him on sick leave." He asked that parishioners inquire no further but grant Father Provost time and privacy to work out what it was that was troubling him. Surely, we thought, it couldn't be alcohol or drugs. We con-

cluded that he must have had some sort of nervous collapse.

A box was placed at the rear of the church to receive our messages. Adults sent him cards and letters; children sent him their thoughtful artwork, expressing affection and wishes for his return. Some of us received responses, many bearing a Washington, D.C., postmark. Father



The parishioners of St. Augustine's Mission were initially sympathetic toward their pastor, Father Ronald Provost, when he was charged with "posing" a ten-year-old boy for semi-nude photographs. Would the Church show the same compassion for his victim?

ther Provost, but we never regarded him as anything more than a marginally adequate pastor. The religious-education classes that he supervised for our children were poorly run; there were no classes for adults; and no grownup ever thought to go to him for counselling or advice on personal matters. In fact, this man, at fifty-three, seemed to have diffi-

Provost said nothing about where he was or what had happened.

Early last summer, our sexton gave me a brown paper supermarket bag, saying that it was from Father Provost, and that, after a seven-month absence, the priest was back in the area. Inside the bag were two street-hockey-championship shirts for my sons, a few packets of greeting cards (Father Provost was famous throughout the diocese for sending cards), and a four-volume set of "Liturgy of the Hours," the Breviary.

The volumes, bound in plastic covers, were in extraordinarily good condition; in fact, three of them were still in the manufacturer's protective cardboard sleeves. Just before Father Provost left, I had mentioned to him my desire to begin some sort of daily prayer. When I asked about the advisability of buying a Breviary, he said, "Oh, no, don't do that—I'll give you mine. I never use them." He laughed, and added, "I never learned how to use them in seminary." I found myself at once moved by his generosity and saddened that his own spiritual life had been so limited.

I learned from the sexton that Father Provost was staying with his brother, Kenneth Provost, in Worcester, and when I called to say thanks for the Breviary he sounded chipper and happy. He had been attending Mass in his home parish, St. Peter's, also in Worcester, and was telling people there that he was awaiting his next parish assignment. For the past seven months, he told me, he had been at the St. Luke Institute, a psychiatric hospital in Suitland, Maryland, just outside Washington. "Ten thousand dollars a month it costs," he said proudly. "A really good place."

He said nothing about why he had gone there, but he implied that the treatment had worked, and said that he was ready and eager to go back to work as a parish priest.

It was a short conversation. I didn't ask Father Provost about his ordeal, but he volunteered a comment that seemed strange to me. "I don't know why they're after me," he said. "Just seven pictures of kids in their underwear." I had no idea what he was talking about.

Later that week, a front-page story in the Worcester *Telegram & Gazette* gave me all too good an idea. The day before, a grand jury had indicted Father Provost on a charge of posing a child in a state of

nudity. That story and two more, on subsequent days, told in some detail what had happened in January, when Father Provost so abruptly left.

On Saturday, January 11, 1992, Father Provost had taken a group of boys and girls, aged between six and sixteen, to swim at a public athletic facility in Gardner, a town about fifteen miles away. A man who had been lifting weights saw the priest taking pictures of one of the boys as he dressed in the locker room, and reported the incident to the lifeguard, and the lifeguard called the police. On Wednesday, January 15th, Detective Sergeant Richard Morrissey, of the Gardner Police Department, called the priest to investigate the complaint. Father Provost voluntarily went to the Gardner police station, handed over his camera, which contained an undeveloped roll of film, and gave a statement. That statement prompted Morrissey to have the film developed immediately. Morrissey accompanied the priest back to the rectory in Barre, where he lived alone. Father Provost led Morrissey to his second-floor bedroom and there he handed over more than a hundred pictures of nude and semi-nude boys, dating back to 1977. (Later, diocesan officials came to clean out Father Provost's room, after he was sent to St. Luke, and they discovered a collection of child-pornography magazines. They also found a collection of baseball cards, the most prized of which were attached to his kitchen wall and his refrigerator door.)

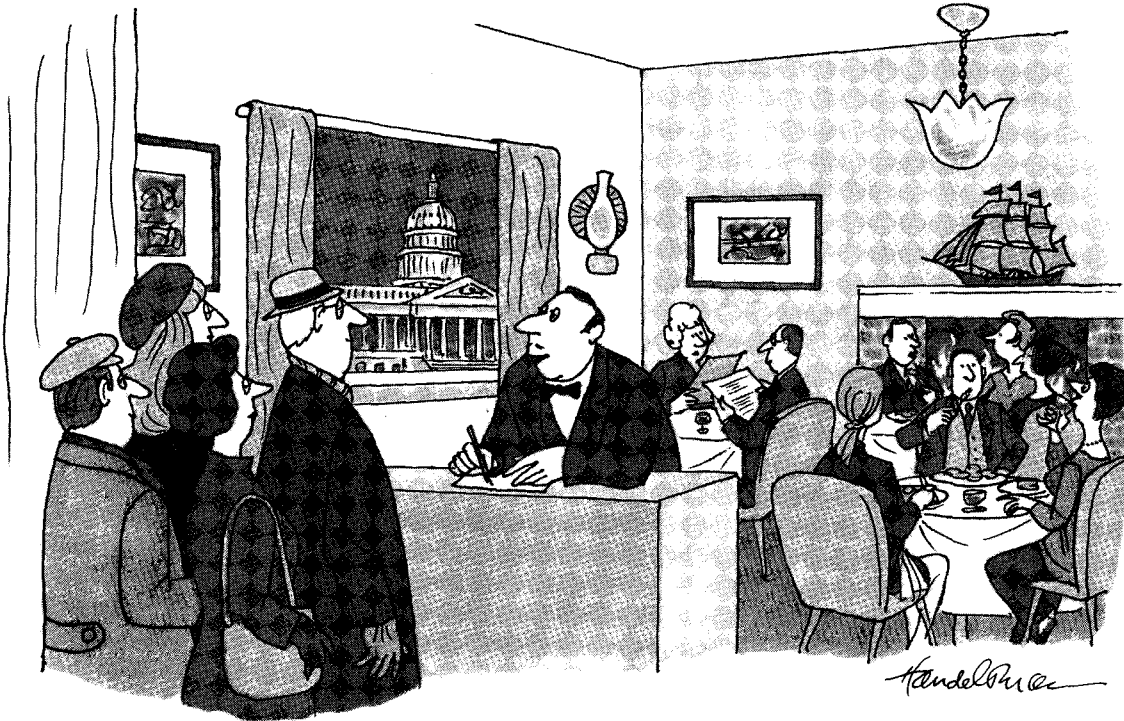
According to his affidavit, Father Provost told the police he had "taken pictures of kids in the nude, mooning," and added, "when I look at these pictures I have sexual tendencies. I have fantasies of having sex with the boys." He said he would often masturbate while looking at the pictures. "I have had the problem of sexuality for about twenty years. . . . I admit that I have a problem and intend on getting help with it," the affidavit said. Father Provost was ordained in 1970; if his confession was true, he had been involved with this kind of voyeurism for virtually all his priestly life.

The mother of the boy in the locker-room pictures told the Worcester newspaper that her children belonged to a youth group that the priest had organized. "He was wonderful with the children," she said, noting that he had sent her son cards and gifts. The mother,

who asked not to be named, went on to say that when the police identified her son in the pictures and came to her, the boy at first defended the priest, saying, "But, Mommy, he told me he was a priest, and it was O.K." She told the newspaper, "Father Ron spent about two years seducing my son."

On the Sunday following Father Provost's indictment, the St. Augustine's parishioners again gathered in the hall after Mass. This time, we found it impossible to look at his pictures of our children in the same way. Had these pictures been a cover for his other interest? Yet, strangely, we defended him in our conversations with one another. We listed his faults and shortcomings, but few spoke disparagingly of him. In fact, many people wanted to present their stories of how good or kind or considerate he had been. One woman told of her bout with cancer when she was pregnant, and how Father Provost said a Mass at the very hour her operation was scheduled. A young couple related how the priest had eased their transition back to church after many years of absence. I volunteered my Breviary story. Father Provost had visited the sick, buried the dead, married a few young couples, heard an occasional confession, and started his homily each Sunday, regardless of the weather, with "Thank God for this beautiful day that we can be together." His Masses were crisp and never went over forty minutes; his sermons were usually bland and sometimes incoherent, but were never assaultive. He always spoke without benefit of notes. The reviews from the pews were forgiving, by and large: he was a great advocate of the Blessed Virgin; he supported the Church's ban on artificial birth-control methods and abortion, but spoke of such controversial topics with a certain understanding of human limitations. Now there was a palpable sadness in the hall, and no anger. A few pictures: what harm had been done?

After all, he was not Father James Porter, the priest who several months earlier had been accused of abusing dozens of children over many years in the various parishes he served in Massachusetts, Minnesota, and New Mexico. And Father Provost's alleged offense was nothing compared with the behavior of Father Joseph Fredette, a priest who had served in Worcester and was accused of



"If you represent special interests, I can seat you immediately."

preying on three of the delinquent boys entrusted to his care in a group home. Father Provost was *our* pastor. Now, with the indictment, he had joined the ever-growing legion of priests—by that time they numbered over four hundred—who had been accused in the last decade of sexual misconduct with children and teen-agers.

I MET Father Provost for lunch a week after the indictment was handed up; it was the first time I had seen him in eight months. When he greeted me on the street outside Al & Harry's Restaurant, on Main Street in Worcester, I could see that he had gained some weight, but that otherwise his looks hadn't changed. He has a full head of gray hair, short on the sides, with a small wave in front. His face is smooth and young-looking. His front teeth are usually in evidence—he has a vague ever-present smile, which seems to indicate little of his mood. That day, he was wearing a sports shirt and dark trousers; it was the first time I had ever seen him in anything other than clerical garb.

He felt tired all the time now, he told me, and would be happy when "all this is over." He was sleeping a lot, watching some sports and news on television, and going for a daily walk. He couldn't con-

centrate on reading. He had read a bit in the first weeks at St. Luke, but then had lost the urge. The days dragged on, with nothing to fill them.

Trying to understand something of his early life and the roots of his vocation, I asked about his family and childhood. "Oh, it was wonderful," he said. I asked about his seminary training. "It was excellent." He said nothing about why he became a priest—what or who had inspired him. When I asked about his life as a parish priest, his face darkened and the smile left. He told me that, while he loved parish work, seven of the eight pastors he served under had been "mean." He said, "They never gave me anything to do."

As for his work in our parish, he said that it had exhausted him. I expected to hear of endless rounds of sick calls, the time needed for preparing sermons, the demands of readying young couples for marriage, and too many meetings, but Father Provost mentioned none of these. "If this hadn't happened, I would have had a nervous breakdown," he said. "I was up until eleven o'clock so many nights. Four hundred bulletins—do you know how long it takes to turn them out each week?"

"What about your prayer life, Father?" I asked. "How was that going?"

He looked at me quizzically, and hesitated. "Oh," he said, and paused again, then added, "Outside of saying the Mass, I really didn't have any."

He talked at length about the spirit of community he had found among the other patients at St. Luke, which specializes in the treatment of pedophile priests. Father Provost said he was now required to be a member of the Worcester chapter of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, and confided that he had been quite shocked by some of the stories he heard, most notably the story of a gay man who had had sex with as many

as fifty partners in a week. The look on Father Provost's face was that of a young boy who was amazed that a grown person could do such a thing. Nonetheless, in these lonely days the group provided him with a sense of belonging to something, he said.

He was optimistic about his chances of being acquitted, and was sure that the lawyer the Church had hired for him, James Reardon, who had handled other cases of alleged sexual abuse by Worcester priests, was first-rate. Again and again, he said that he would be happy when "this is all over."

And after that?

Father Provost looked down into his plate. He said he knew that his days as a parish priest were finished.

WHEN I went to see Father Provost's own pastor, Bishop Timothy Harrington, of Worcester, I was somewhat surprised to find that he had gathered his counsellors about him: Auxiliary Bishop George Rueger and Monsignor Edmond Tinsley, the diocesan director of fiscal affairs. We talked at the Bishop's residence, a handsome, spacious Tudor home on Worcester's west side. Bishop Harrington, who is seventy-four, had welcomed me into his living room dressed in a brightly striped

knit shirt, but he had the look of a beleaguered man. He told me that he had recently recovered from a heart ailment; that a church he was trying to combine with another nearby in Worcester had been occupied for months by angry parishioners; and that vocations were at a trickle. In the presence of his counselors, who spoke very little, Bishop Harrington ruminated about a Church that, sadly, no longer existed—a Church whose primary concerns once were parishes that didn't pay their apportionments or deciding what to do with an alcoholic priest. "What happened?" he said, shaking his head. "What happened? I just don't understand."

When we finally turned to Father Provost's situation, it was obvious that the three clergymen had been concerned that more might be disclosed about the priest's private sexual life. Would more charges be forthcoming? Had Father Provost been more than a voyeur? Had his looking ever developed into physical molestation?

When I asked Bishop Harrington directly, he said unequivocally that he had had no idea of Father Provost's problem. He had received no complaints from parents, nor had any adults come forward to say that Father Provost had taken similar liberties with them when they were young. The Bishop had learned about the problem the day after the police confronted the priest, and plans were immediately set in motion to send Father Provost to St. Luke. If anything, Bishop Harrington was surprised when the priest was indicted; after seven months with no action, he had concluded that there was insufficient evidence. He had hoped—prayed—that the incident would pass.

THE *Catholic Free Press*, the Worcester diocesan weekly newspaper, keeps a file of clippings on every priest. Before Father Provost's current dilemma was added to the clipping file, he appeared to have had a quite successful twenty years in the priesthood. While still a seminarian, he had been a respected chaplain at the Treasure Valley Boy Scout Reservation, in Paxton, where, according to a 1968 article, "the kids responded to Ronnie," a camp staff member said, and youngsters "yelled

and screamed" at his every appearance. With thirty-three thousand dollars in federal funds, Father Provost had built a street-hockey rink in Fitchburg, north of Worcester. His teams were the national champions in 1980 and 1982. He was so beloved in a parish in Winchendon, on the northern edge of the diocese, that when word came from the diocese of his transfer to another church, after only a year there, fifteen hundred signatures were obtained in a protest drive, led by a teen-age boy. He bought and renovated antique fire engines and gave children rides. He took children on camping trips to the White Mountains or to Whalom Park, a nearby amusement park. And there was his philosophy of the priesthood, spelled out in a newspaper article: "Fire and brimstone is not the way today to keep the young close to God. In a society rife with alienation, the love and protection available from God and from doing good is the answer." Also included in his folder was a card listing the barest

information about his family, his education, and his parish assignments. He had served ten parishes in twenty years. I was later told by one Church official that during that period no other parish priest in the Worcester diocese had been transferred more often.

Ronald Provost grew up in a second-floor apartment in a triple-decker in the working-class section of Worcester. Father James Hoey, who had been in the Boy Scouts with him from the time they attended St. Peter's grade school (he had also been the Provosts' paper boy), remembers a smiling mother, Laura Provost, but has no memory at all of Provost's father, John, who was a factory worker at American Steel & Wire. "I try to remember his father, and all I remember is a guy standing back from the door, in the shadows," Father Hoey told me last fall. There was a brother, Ken, three years younger, and two sisters. Father Hoey, now a pastor in Leominster, outside Worcester, and others who knew Provost as a young boy



"There's a notice from the co-op board. Would we be interested in playing softball on the Great Lawn?"

recall him as obsessed with Scouting, in love with outdoor activities and camping. But he was never to be found at such mixed-company events as the frequent dances held at St. Peter's, which was the social, educational, and religious center of their young lives.

After high school, Provost worked for six years as a shipping clerk and counterman at an electrical-supply company. Then, in 1962, he was accepted into Holy Apostles Seminary, in Cromwell, Connecticut. His was considered a "late vocation"—something rare at that time, for most boys then went directly from high school to seminary. Father Peter Inzerillo, who was accepted as a seminarian the same year as Provost and later became a classmate of his at St. Bonaventure College, near Olean, New York, recalls, "There were no tests, mental or psychological, in those days. You just showed up at the cathedral on the designated Sunday and sat down with a priest. He asked you a few questions about why you wanted to become a priest and then opened his Breviary and asked you to read the Latin and translate it. There were really no questions about your family, and I'm sure the word 'sex' was not mentioned. All the better if you had never dated or had a serious relationship. You had shown yourself to be serious about preserving your vocation. What the standards were we didn't know. You were notified, and you went off to study."

Of his and Provost's seminary years together Father Inzerillo remembers "an agreeable, smiling guy who never said much in class," and says, "He didn't seem to be the best student. I guess he had problems keeping up with his studies. But he was very sincere. When we'd do our laundry, or something like that, we'd ask him to go for pizza with us, but he never seemed to want to do that. Looking back, I guess he was kind of a hit-and-run kind of guy—you never got below the surface with him. But, given the opportunity to go out and do a project with some kids, he'd be eager."

Father Hoey says, "Seminary training at the time really didn't help you grow up, or face anything in the real world. It was considered more a place to shield you, to preserve your vocation in the midst of an evil, secular world."

A person with access to Provost's personnel file says that if Provost's record at both seminaries revealed anything about the man or his future, it was concern about his immaturity. But seminary was a time to learn the intricacies of Catholic dogma and ritual, and a young man like Ronald Provost—so the thinking went in those days—would surely grow up in the priesthood. After all, he did not act out; he did not disobey rules.

In March, 1968, when Ronald Provost was in his second year at St. Bonaventure, a small item appeared at the bottom of an inside page of the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*. Kenneth, Ronald's brother, who was then twenty-seven and was working in a factory, had been arrested on a "morals offense"—a newspaper euphemism that often indicated either indecent exposure or the indecent assault and battery of a minor. Such items were routinely accorded scant coverage, and there is no indication that the seminary or the Worcester chancery was aware that the accused was related to the seminarian Ronald Provost, who was so passionately interested in youth activities.

After his ordination, in 1970, Father Provost's first few parish assignments brought him under the authority of a series of pastors who were known to be quite demanding. This was a period of clerical hazing, a rite of passage for young priests, their boot camp. They were expected to develop a social life outside the rectory with priest friends of

their own age to see them through these rocky days. But with these pastors a pattern was formed in Father Provost's life which would not be broken. "He was the kind of priest who drove the old-style pastors nuts," says Father

George Lange, who served with Provost at St. Mary's in Southbridge, on the outskirts of Worcester. "He was always out of the rectory, doing kids' things—stickball, Scouts, trips—and kids were calling day and night for Father Ron. We had some antiques in the attic at St. Mary's, and he was selling them to get money for stickball. Our pastor, Monsignor James Gilrain, went through the roof. All these activities with the kids would have gone down easier if he had done his parish stuff, too. But he didn't. He was getting a reputation in

the diocese as a guy who didn't do his share." Bob Feen, who served with Father Provost at a parish in Fitchburg (and has since left the priesthood), says, "He had his own agenda, and it never involved Catholic Youth Organization stuff or the classic Catholic activities; his work was largely outside the church. He was busy all the time. I remember him one night mailing out a hundred and twenty-seven cards to Scouts from the previous summer's camp and complaining that he had a hundred and thirty-six more to do. He always seemed at odds with authority, but with kids he was comfortable, relaxed—that is, until they reached about fifteen. Then he wouldn't have anything to do with them."

A priest who served in one of Father Provost's early parishes remembers feeling discomfort as he watched Father Provost standing behind one of the parish boys and massaging the boy's head. "When it happened the first time, I didn't think much of it. But then it happened over and over again. I felt squeamish. But what was I going to say? It was so embarrassing that you almost didn't want to look, and yet you didn't know what to say, so you avoided the guy. A thing like that distances priests from one another."

The quick transfers from his early parishes seem not to have been prompted by any reported impropriety but instead by the pastors' reactions to him: they apparently found the young priest distant and difficult to live with, so obsessed with youth activities that his other work suffered. And yet Father Provost's personnel file shows nothing of the kind. No calls from irate pastors were recorded. Letter after letter attesting to Father Provost's excellent work with young people accumulated. Anyone going through his file would conclude that he was a model priest.

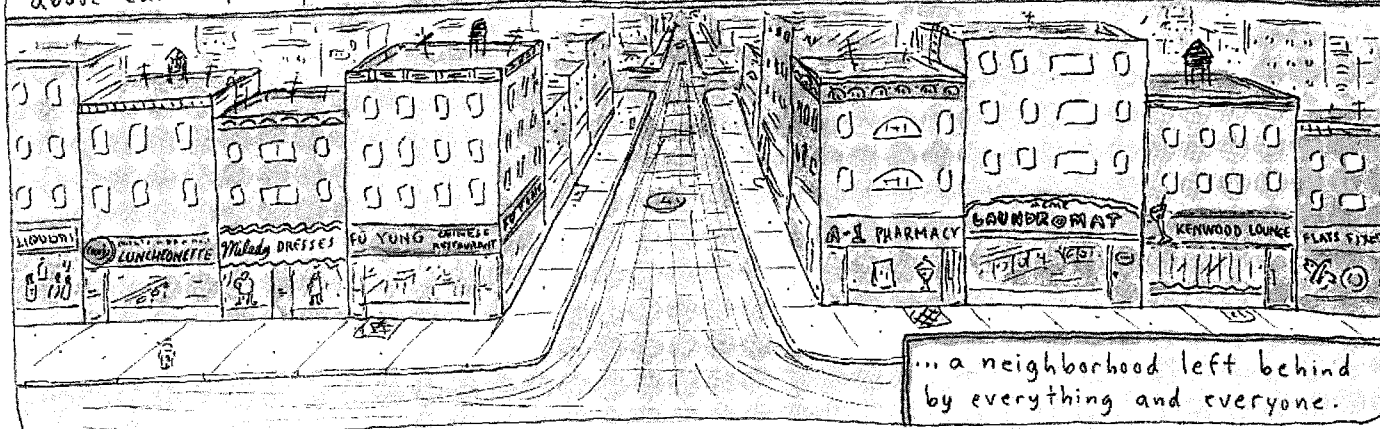
By 1979, when Father Provost reached Our Lady of Mount Carmel—St. Ann, in Worcester, he had been a priest for nine years. Here, pornographic pictures of young boys were inadvertently discovered in Father Provost's room. This incident was supposedly reported to the diocese, but no mention of it can be found in Father Provost's personnel file. At this time, Father Provost began visits to the House of Affirmation, in Whitinsville, a small town outside Worcester. The House of Affir-



DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR ROBERT DE NIRO'S NEWEST TV SHOW

"KENWOOD PARK"

Kenwood Park, a Brooklyn neighborhood of two- and three-story buildings with apartments above car-repair places, run-down luncheonettes, laundromats, bars, and strange, sad dress shops...



THIS WEEK:



n. ch

mation, a treatment and therapy center, was co-founded in 1973 by Father Thomas Kane. (It was closed in 1989, after thousands of dollars in operating funds were found to be missing, and Father Kane has recently been named in a civil suit charging that he molested a nine-year-old boy, Mark Barry. Barry, now thirty-four, also charges that Kane

not only had sex with him at the House of Affirmation but arranged for him to have sex with another priest and a therapist there.) The House of Affirmation was staffed by both clerical and secular therapists and counsellors, and offered both in-patient and out-patient treatment to priests, nuns, and religious brothers who were having problems, which

might range from crises of faith about their vocation to drug and alcohol abuse and child molestation. The House of Affirmation promised its clients confidentiality. The reason for Father Provost's treatment, its duration, and its result are not part of his personnel record.

At the time, pedophilia among priests—while rarely revealed to the

public and never openly discussed by Church officials—was actually a well-known phenomenon in many clerical circles. But it was looked upon as a matter not of pathology but of immorality—a failing, but one not nearly on a par with sexual involvement with women. The priest-pedophile was asked to repent his sin—perhaps to make a retreat, or to seek help at a place like the House of Affirmation—and then was reassigned to a tough pastor, who could keep him in line. No thought was given to any extended treatment. As for the young victims, they were viewed almost as inanimate objects or else were looked upon as sources of temptation for a consecrated servant of God. “They’re kids, they don’t know anything about sex, they’ll forget about it,” an archbishop told me, sadly recalling the attitude prevalent at the time.

In the Worcester of twenty years ago, I have been told, if a priest had any sexual problems or was involved in a compromising incident—even if it involved an arrest—the diocese could prevail upon the local papers not to write about it and upon the district attorney’s office not to prosecute. To reveal a priest’s shortcomings was akin to blasphemy in the eyes of diocesan officials, and they were ever vigilant against such disclosures. Clerical *omertà* was a given. One Worcester priest recalls an altar boy’s coming to him: “The kid was shaking. This was very hard for him to do—to tell on Father. He said one of the other priests had taken out a comb and was simulating combing his pubic hairs. The kid knew that it was wrong—but the thing was, it wasn’t *that* wrong. The boy was wise enough not to let it go by. Of course, now we know that that is a prelude to a further seduction of the kid. Anyhow, I went in to the bishop and told him. He turned it right back on me. Was I having difficulty getting along with this priest? What was the state of my soul that I could cast such a judgment? Dismissal is the most effective tool for silencing someone. It worked—I never said another word about this guy. He was later arrested for molesting a boy.”

Father Provost moved on, creating a legend for himself—not only with all his youth activities but by the cards he sent out, to all the Worcester priests on their birthdays and to all his young parish-

GHOSTS

1.
This puzzled mumbling stranger in our midst, in a mist,
is truly at a loss. Sackcloth, the clouds come down as ash.
The scorched word *angel* drifts up the chimney.
Bankrupt, woebegone, the fire black out: nothing breathes
in this world of broken glass where the rose window
has lost its magic, dancers wither into smoke, forlorn gums
keep their teeth wide open in a mug of cold water. Nothing
in the dark but a tuft of beige hair and a wisp of white
whispering at the window, *We have come this far*. The air
raw as a peeled turnip, a turnip-colored dawn
daubing the East, the shell of one bell bringing the sniffers out
to eight-o’clock Mass. At the front window of my mother’s
widowed house a face, though you know it isn’t there, stares.

2.
They’ll come stumbling back, white hands stretched out,
wearing their wounds like garish buttons, surrounded
by a careful ache of brightness. You won’t be able to
avoid their pulsing minutiae, that fringe of frayed light
they cast around your cloud. One at a time
you’ll let them enter the narrow room you lie in
in the dark, a stone pressed between chest and throat,
touch of salt on the tongue, letting the fragments
reassemble. Day dipped in wormwood, you’ll learn to live
with the curtains drawn, unstaunched heartless light
streaming, the smallest stammering breath of them
remembered, and everything you didn’t understand
staring back at you as pure fact, their closed faces.

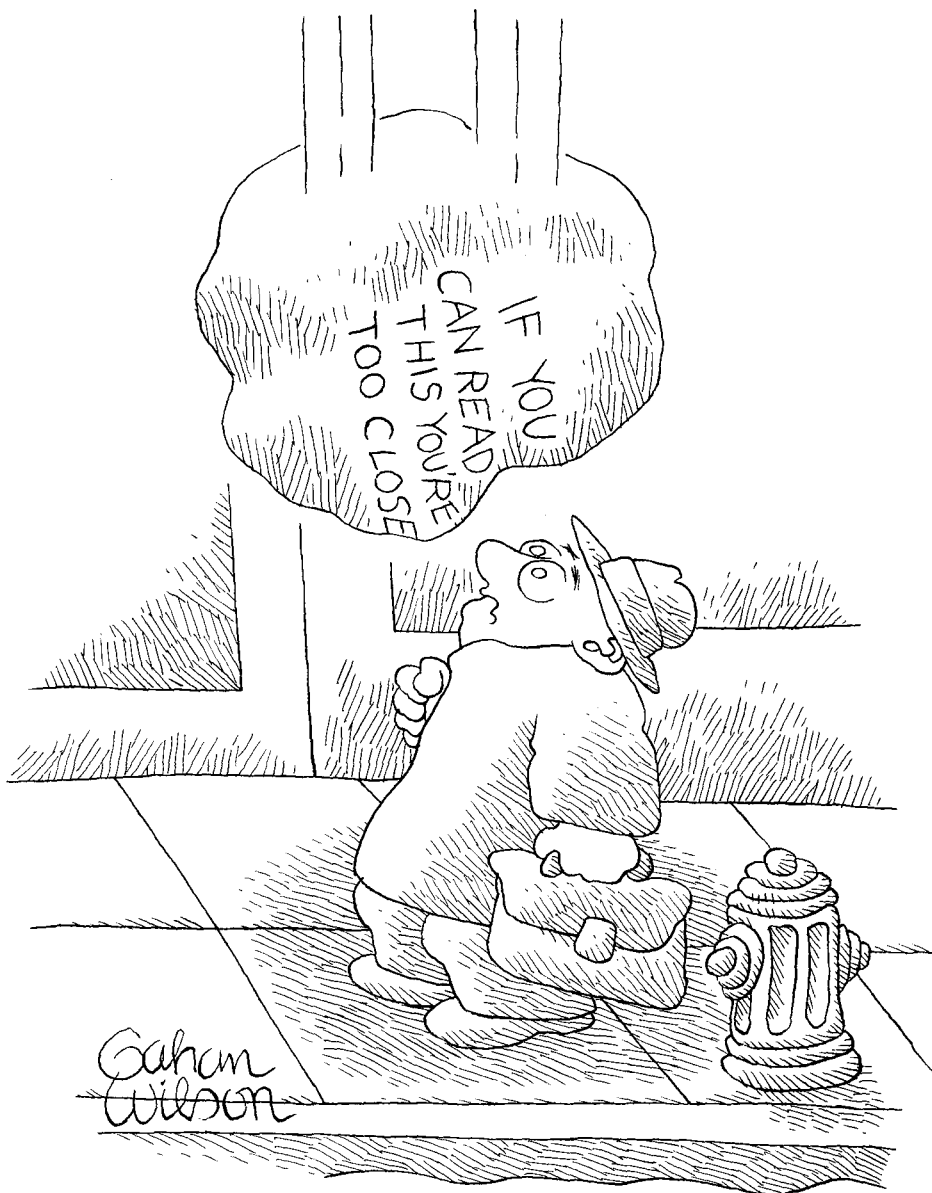
3.
I can see the two of them moving slowly over the sand
away from me, grown very small in the growing distance:
her pale-blue cardigan; his olive-green tweed jacket; the slow
roll of her hips; his straight back. And the light hovering
over them till I see no sign before me, only know
they’ve entered into a last glimpse of her hand reaching out
for help over a rocky place, and he stopping—at last—
and stretching a hand back to help her just as I’d hoped
he would before the sun went in and I have to hurry
from a coming shower. They have become, then,
the barest glimmer, as if passed through a glass wall in air
and walking on the other side of light. For minutes
I see nothing but rocks, the tide rising to cover them,
taupe-green and navy-blue tongues foaming closer. Then,
is that them again? Two tiny figures floating along the far
wall of the pier and gone, nothing but a light shaft
clinging a moment to the stone until it too seems to shiver
and enter itself and go, a luminous late withering, leaving
me to stare at where it was. You take what you can, even
light on stone, those two hands knowing an instant’s touch,
the exact exchange of that before the loaded cloud
comes over, slows down light, and shakes it out as rain.

—EAMON GRENNAN

ioners on theirs. Even children in his former parishes heard from him on their birthdays. He never failed to attend clergy retreats, and eagerly engaged priests in conversation at the social hour. "It was obvious that he wanted companionship, but it was hard to sustain a conversation with him," Father Lange says. "It was always about street hockey or baseball cards."

Another story about Father Provost that became widely known in the diocese was his annual observance of his grandmother's birthday. He never mentioned his parents, both of whom died not long after his ordination, but each year, according to one priest I talked to, he would have a Mass and a rectory birthday party for his grandmother, cake and all. This wouldn't have been unusual—many priests relish their strong family ties, especially because they lead such an itinerant life—except that his grandmother, too, had been dead for years.

When, in 1983, Father Provost was assigned the post of chaplain at Saint Vincent Hospital, a large Catholic facility in Worcester, any priest knowledgeable about diocesan transfers would have suspected that something was wrong. "His whole life was street hockey, and all of a sudden he's at the hospital—you wonder what's up," says Father Robert Keresey, the pastor of Christ the King Church in Worcester, who had once been the diocese's vocations director. Father Jack Gallagher, a member of the Order of St. Camillus, whose mission is to work with the sick, says, "The drunks, the misfits—if you couldn't find anyplace else for them, they were too often made chaplains; in those days, we got a lot of them. But Ronnie was amazing. He'd run off copies of these soppy Helen Steiner Rice poems and start on the top floor and work his way down, handing them out. He'd cover all six hundred and twenty beds in a day, and some days do half of them again. It was his idea of visiting people. We worked four days off and four days on at Saint Vincent. In his four days off, he was still running the street hockey. I remember one day he had given a woman a ride to the hospital and she arrived to find that her husband had died. 'Jack, I can't believe it,' he told me afterward. 'She cried and cried and wouldn't stop.' I told him I



spent an hour, maybe an hour and a half with a person after a loved one died. He was amazed. 'What do you say, Jack?' he asked me. Then, there was the time in the emergency room. This Italian woman was dying. Ron walked in, pulled out his book, and, without saying a word to the woman, or to her daughters, standing at the bedside, began reading the anointing prayers. The daughters came up on either side of him and put their arms through his, just trying to make some contact at this very special moment. I could see the prayer book begin shaking in his hands. 'Get these women off me!' he yelled. I wondered, 'What the hell is wrong with this guy?'

Father Keresey says, "There is a theory of ongoing transformation and

growth for priests, where you can correct your shortcomings, where you can learn to do better. But it's a joke. Unless you do it on your own, it doesn't happen. There is no structure to encourage you, or to bolster you. Listen, these are tough days to be a priest. Most of the time we feel pretty much alone out here." Informal support groups and prayer groups for priests did form in the Worcester diocese in the late seventies and early eighties. Some priests remembered seeing Father Provost at one or two meetings, but after that he drifted away.

Other dioceses began to institute procedures by which parishioners could periodically offer an evaluation of their priests, and clergy were called upon for their assessments of fellow-priests, but, according to several priests, Bishop

Harrington steadfastly sided with his presbyterial council, which opposed such evaluations. "When the people had a lousy priest, they had no place to go," a Worcester priest said. "And when we saw stuff we didn't like, what the hell could we do? Go in and have it turned back on us?" Whenever an accusation or a rumor arose about sexual misconduct with children, the diocesan procedure was to insist that the accuser face the accused—that the child be forced to confront the priest. The well-being of parishioners was categorically set aside in favor of a strictly legalistic approach that presumed a priest's innocence and doubted the child's veracity.

IN 1988, Father Provost, with eighteen years' seniority, was in the zone for becoming a pastor. He had previously been passed over, and most of his 1970 classmates had been given their own churches. Once again, his file was presented for consideration to the diocesan personnel board. Though he had been moved frequently, his record contained no formal complaints, no allegations of impropriety. As the board attempted to balance the ever smaller number of

priests with the ever larger number of Catholics needing pastors, the bottom line was not "Why?" but "Why not?"

The board members were confronted with a man who had clearly demonstrated problems with interpersonal relations, who had difficulties getting along with his pastors and fellow-priests, and yet was comfortable in the company of young boys—never girls or older teenagers or adults.

"There were what we called 'ghosts' all around Ronnie—rumors—but we had nothing specific on him," one priest told me. "At a time like that, priests ask themselves, 'Am I going to cast the first stone?' We didn't want to turn into a police state, running down everything we heard about him."

And the "ghosts" were many. It was on young boys that Father Provost was now focussing his attention exclusively—and, many who knew him felt, inappropriately. There were rarely any other adult leaders on his outings. And he had taken trips to Disney World with only two or three boys.

Father Inzerillo offers a view of seminary days that seems to pertain to ordained life as well: "Unless it's broken,

we don't fix it. When it's cracked, we just patch it up instead of taking it out of service." And Father Keresey says, "I don't want to cast any judgment upon Father Provost, but in any other business he would have been fired long ago."

Moving a priest from parish to parish is known to undermine both his sense of place and his confidence. Giving Father Provost a parish of his own was seen as a way of restoring both to him. "He'll be the boss out there; that should improve his confidence," one diocesan official said as the decision was made to give Father Provost a parish. "Maybe he'll grow up out there," another member of the personnel board added of this now fifty-year-old priest. Indicating its reservations about Father Provost, the personnel board appointed him administrator, rather than pastor, of his new church. This is a step taken in approximately twenty per cent of pastoral appointments, and is meant to make sure that the priest is up to the job and will mesh with the congregation. Canon law prohibits a pastor from being removed without cause—due process must be observed—so bishops are wary of putting a pastor's mantle upon shoulders they are not sure can bear the weight. "I just hope he doesn't turn it into an amusement park out there," one board member commented. "But let's give him a year and see how he does. He can't do too much harm."

Bishop Harrington—the member of the personnel board who had the greatest reservations about Father Provost—was finally won over by his colleagues.

MANY people, both inside and outside the Catholic Church, wonder about the role that the vow of celibacy plays in encouraging—or, at least, sheltering—pedophile priests. Discussion on this subject is emotionally charged and frequently lacks sound evidence, but it is possible to approach the question clinically. Dr. Frank Valcour, the medical director of the St. Luke Institute, who has treated hundreds of

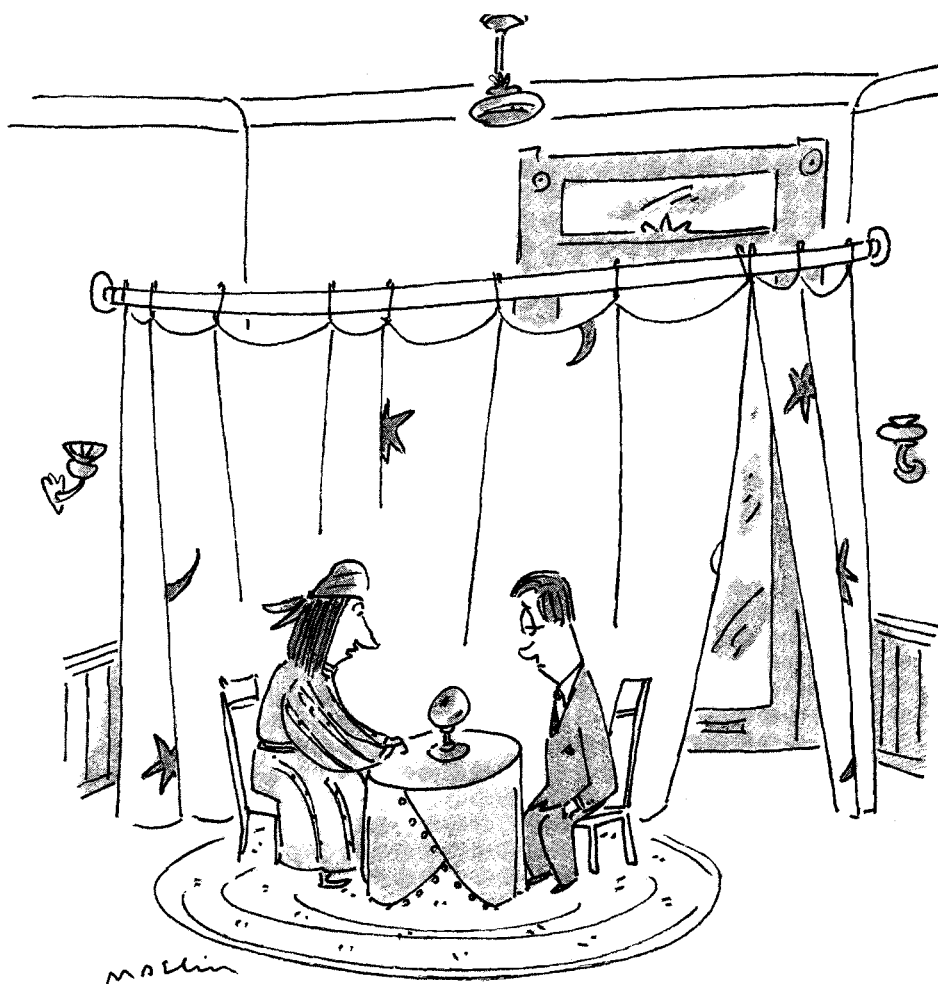


"And after the prime rate declined by half a point, and the Dow rose by thirty-two, guess what happened to Goose and Fox?"

priests with pedophilic tendencies, told me, "The sexually underdeveloped person may be drawn to a profession where celibacy is a given. The priesthood can be a safe place for such persons, where they will not be called upon to develop sexually—where, in fact, they may even be rewarded for not developing a sexual identity." In some cases, priests may rationalize that becoming heterosexually involved is a direct violation of their vow of celibacy and a threat to their priesthood, while sexual acts with a child, though wrong, are forgivable and are somehow not as great a sin.

Dr. Fred Berlin, the head of a team at the Johns Hopkins Hospital which treats sexual disorders, believes that living under the mandate of celibacy may actually prevent a pedophile from expressing his sexuality in a more normal manner, leaving him to act out with children. Vincent Bilotta, a Worcester-area psychologist who has treated priests with pedophilia and other problems, says, "Too many men—with the best of intentions—have been ordained and then sent off to slaughter. Many have come through seminaries that were repressive and sexually dysfunctional; they find that the ongoing formation they were promised is nonexistent; they live an itinerant life, going from parish to parish, living with men with whom they may have nothing in common. They live with extraordinary stress, and, as is true of anyone in stress, their bodies ache to be relieved. And here are these young kids, who look up to the priest with great esteem and admiration, who offer direct access to emotional contact. It makes perfect sense—and is a tragedy—that a priest would turn to children."

These days, priests who have been accused of child abuse—and those rare priests who come forward and admit their problem—are treated primarily at two institutions: the Servants of the Paraclete, in Jemez Springs, New Mexico (which allows priests in treatment to serve local parishes; several priests who stayed there are now accused or under indictment in New Mexico on pedophilia charges), and the St. Luke Institute, where Father Provost was sent. At St. Luke, priests receive individual and group therapy, and participate in psychodramas in which they reenact both their acts of molesta-



"According to an article in the upcoming issue of 'The New England Journal of Medicine,' all your fears are well founded."

tion and the traumatic moments of their formative years which might have caused their pedophilia. "These are articulate men, used to talking their way around things, and that must stop if they are to be helped," says Dr. Valcour. "They have to admit what they did. They also have to identify with their victims, to see the harm they have caused. Morality is often a defense: 'I went to confession about this.' That's not good enough."

The impact of priest pedophilia, both on the individuals affected and on the institution of the Church, has been devastating. All cases of sexual abuse of children by adults involve the misuse of authority, of course, but in the case of priests the authority misused is exceptionally powerful. One priest who had a young boy routinely perform oral sex on him would give him absolution from the sin while the boy was still on his

knees. Another priest told a boy while fondling him that what he did was "an expression of God's love" and that "God is blessing this act." A third priest told his young victims, "I am God's instrument and God wants you to have pleasure right now, in this way." A woman has charged that as a girl she told Father James Porter in the confessional that a boy had touched her immodestly; Porter is alleged to have insisted on a demonstration and to have taken the girl into his section of the confessional and fondled her. Priests have admitted to scanning the congregation for child sex objects while saying Mass and ejaculating while at the altar. "Sex clubs" at which young boys were passed from priest to priest have been discovered in New York State and in Canada; others are rumored to have existed in South Bend and other cities.

There are thousands upon thousands

of boys and girls, scarred men and women, whose bodies have been invaded and whose self-worth has been destroyed by perhaps the most revered and trusted adult in their young lives. (An active pedophile may have dozens of victims and may abuse some of them continually over an extended period.) Sexually abused children are often fearful and uncommunicative; a few commit suicide. Adults who were sexually abused as children have higher than average rates of substance abuse, divorce, and mental illness. Some of them molest children in turn.

A recent study by Stephen Rossetti, a priest and psychologist who is now on the staff at St. Luke, shows that revelations of priests having abused children are a major factor in the recent steep decline in American Catholics' confidence in their Church. Catholics trust their priests less, and are less inclined to want their sons to be altar boys or priests. An overwhelming majority believe that the Church has not been honest with them about priests' sexual abuse of children, and has not dealt with the problem forthrightly. "Pedophilia is the lightning rod for disaffected Catholics who find their Church unresponsive or their priests inadequate," Father Rossetti told me. "When people read of abuse by a priest, it is seen as the abuse not of a single priest but of the entire Church."

Every bishop in America is painfully aware of the existence of not only the convicted but also the accused and the suspected pedophiles among his priests. But the bishop faces a conundrum unlike any confronting an employer in the secular world. A priest is a priest forever; his bishop must provide him with work, or simply provide for him, forever. In addition, a public revelation of a priest who is only suspected, and not actually accused, of abusing children could open the diocese to a civil suit for defamation of character. And, because ordained priests are becoming something of an endangered species, any bishop is reluctant to remove a priest from the active ministry.

There are smaller, less publicized losses as well. Priests now almost routinely avoid talking privately with children, because of the charged atmosphere, or they keep office doors wide open if youngsters are with them. "A

mother came to me and asked that I take her son under my wing, because the couple had separated and the father was giving the boy a hard time," Father Hoey told me. "Before all this, I would have had the kid come in on Saturdays and help around the church, and then I'd go out and have a hamburger with him, and let him talk. Now? Impossible."

For Catholics of my generation, who came of age in the fifties, it was not uncommon to see a priest walking around the church grounds with girls and boys holding on to his hands or his cassock as he tousled a head of hair or pulled on a ponytail. No longer. Last fall, as I sat with Father Jack Siciliano, who now serves in St. Peter's, Father Provost's old parish, he looked out mournfully over Main Street at an area that over the years has become poorer and is now home largely to minority families. "Many of these kids need a male role model, and they need to be touched, they need to be hugged," he said. "I just can't do it anymore."

If a child needs that physical affection, so does Father—who has vowed never to be a real father. A priest's work with children and young people—the healthy, normal, productive sublimation of his generative drive—must now be curtailed, self-censored. Ordinary, everyday touches and hugs, which were once a legitimate expression of his physicalness, are now denied him.

At nine o'clock on the morning of October 28th, Father Provost appeared in court as his lawyer, James Reardon, filed a petition to dismiss the charges against him, contending insufficient evidence. With that vague smile on his face, Father Provost made his way through the courthouse crowd, his gaze fixed on some distant point on



the ceiling. In less than ten minutes, his court appearance was over. November 18th was agreed upon as the date to hear arguments on the motion to dismiss.

A motion to dismiss is a customary legal tactic, a preemptive strike at the heart of the prosecution's case. Reardon, in a brief, argued that the evidence did not fall under the Commonwealth's applicable pornography statute. "The photographs which form the basis for the indictment do not display a minor in the state of nudity. . . . It is also important to note that none of the photographs demonstrate any frontal nudity on the part of the minor. Nor is the underwear which the minor is wearing translucent, or in any way less than opaque."

I flipped through the document to Exhibit A, a copy of the indictment. There, for anyone who cared to consult the public record, was the name of the ten-year-old boy whom Father Provost photographed that January day at the public pool in Gardner. Exhibits B through M were the photographs of the boy, arranged three to a page. The original color prints had been photocopied in black-and-white, so the collection had an added starkness. The pictures were now streaked with black lines, and virtually all contrast had been lost. There was the boy listed in the indictment, his expression denied any nuance, his features just blobs and lines, almost like the elements of a caricature. In the first picture, Exhibit B, he stands with his back to the camera, hands on hips, his face grinning in profile, his buttocks clearly exposed above cotton jockey briefs, which have been pulled down. Exhibit C presents a similar picture. In Exhibit D, the boy turns full face and grimaces. His briefs are now pulled up. His right middle finger pokes out over the edge of his underwear in a "Fuck you" gesture. The next three pictures depict the boy looking wistful and pensive, and still wearing only his briefs. In Exhibit H, the finger pokes up from his briefs. Exhibit I is another middle-finger shot; this time it is a blurry white mass, defiantly thrust into the air, shoulder high. In Exhibit J, the boy looks as though he were jogging. K is another middle-finger shot, this one in profile. In Exhibit L, the boy is making peace signs with two fingers of each hand. In the final picture, Exhibit M, he poses as a muscle

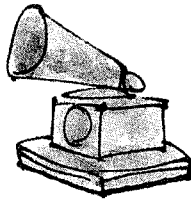
Overshadowed by the Tonys: Broadway's Lesser Known Awards

THE TINY



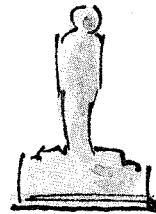
BEST MUSICAL
FEATURING
CUTE LITTLE
KIDS

THE TINNY



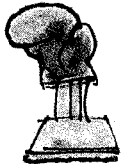
BEST REVIVAL
OF A MUSICAL
NOBODY LIKED
THE FIRST TIME

THE TORNY



BEST PERFORMANCE
BY AN ACTOR
RESEMBLING
RIP TORN

THE TUNNEY



BEST PLAY
ABOUT BOXING

THE TASTY

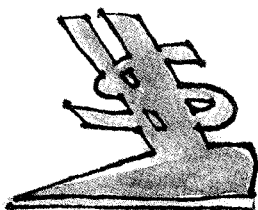


BEST BEVERAGE
SERVED DURING
AN INTERMISSION

THE TOTIE



BEST PORTRAYAL
OF
TOTIE FIELDS



THE TOSHY

BEST MUSICAL NOT PRODUCED
BY CAMERON MACKINTOSH

STEVENSON

man, his scrawny arms and taut leg muscles rigidly flexed.

From the newspaper description of the photographs on which the charge against Father Provost was based—and from his own unsolicited comment to me on the phone—I had assumed them to be a series of quickly snapped candid, photo opportunities unobtrusively and casually exploited by a man who sought to add a new erotic jewel to the treasure chest in his rectory bedroom. But these twelve pictures were hardly that. There had been an interchange—spoken or unspoken—between photographer and subject. There had been encouragement to go on.

Questions flooded my mind. Where were the other boys? None were shown in the photographs. How had the priest managed to separate this boy from the others? And what had gone on between priest and boy to produce this many poses, to allow time for the flash to recycle, for underwear to be put on, yanked down, and then pulled back into place? The pity I once felt for Father Provost turned to something else. I have two boys of my own, seven and nine years old. They had trusted Father Provost—and I had trusted him with

them. Had Father Provost not been confronted on that January evening, that face looking up at me through the photocopied photograph could have been a son of mine.

On November 18th, the motion to dismiss was argued by James Reardon's son Gavin before Judge James Donohue. Gavin Reardon's defense was a narrow and highly technical one, centering on the claim that the photographs the priest had taken of the young boy did not constitute a pornographic portrayal as the statute defines the term, because there was no frontal nudity depicted. Judge Donohue's frequent shifting in his leather chair and his pointed, impatient questions signalled the outcome. The motion was denied. The trial date was set for December 21st.

In the weeks before Father Provost's trial was to begin, the swirl of allegations of sexual abuse by priests continued as national news. In the Diocese of Worcester, they became almost epidemic. Father Justin Steponaitis, a former Worcester parish priest, and Father Victor Frobas, who had served a Worcester parish years before while receiving treatment at the House of

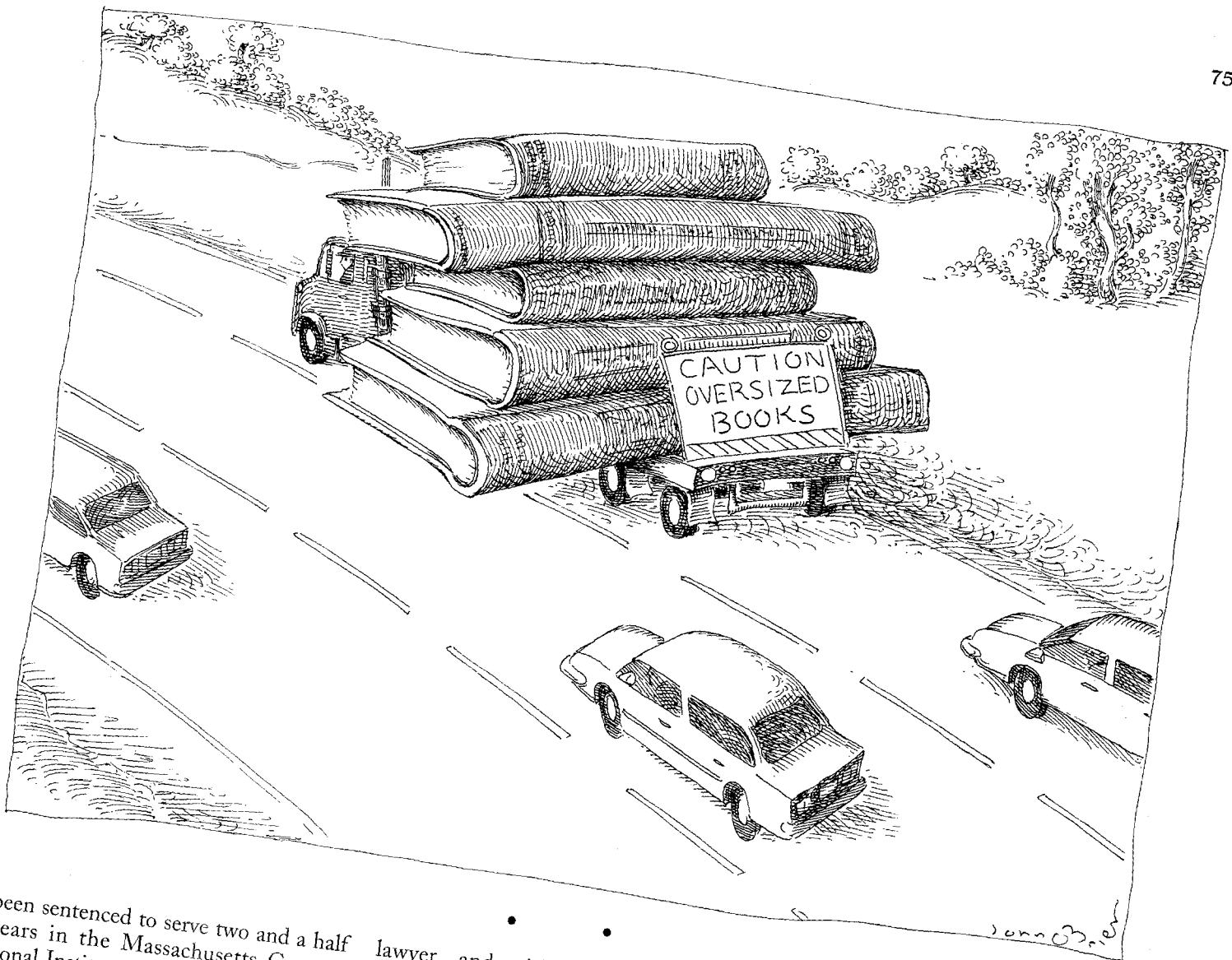
Affirmation, were accused of molesting young boys; Fathers Joseph Fredette and David Holley were formally charged in multicount indictments with sexually abusing many young boys. These allegations and charges prompted still more parishioners to come forward to tell of their own abuse as youngsters. (The priest who had told me earlier of the altar boy who complained about a priest's suggestively combing the outside of his trousers now identified the priest as Holley, whose inappropriate behavior he had tried to report years before.) Father Robert Kelley, of Gardner, fifteen miles north of Worcester, who received a five-to-seven-year prison sentence, in 1990, for repeatedly molesting and raping a girl, beginning when she was ten and continuing over the next two years, was now eligible for parole. Not only did his victim come out publicly to oppose any leniency but four more women came forward to claim that Kelley had also molested them when they were children. Yet another priest, Monsignor Leo Battista, of Worcester, was accused by a nun, who had gone to him for counselling, of exploiting her sexually—she claimed that on one occasion he had sex with her just after she attempted suicide.

The diocese responded to this spate of cases by publishing chancery phone numbers that could be called to report suspected child abuse. Bishop Harrington proclaimed that no child abuser would be assigned to parish work, but that promise, while welcome, seemed hollow to many priests and lay people in Worcester. Obviously, no convicted child molester would be assigned to a parish, but what of other priests, who only had "ghosts"? The burden of proof was still on the victim. And, while the diocese promised an approach that was "personal and pastoral," no offers of counselling or therapy to alleged victims, including the boy Father Provost had photographed, were forthcoming.

All the stories of sexual molestation by priests were on the front pages of the Worcester *Telegram & Gazette*. But another case, also scheduled for December 21st in Worcester Superior Court, barely merited a mention on an inside page. Kenneth Provost, Father Ronald's fifty-one-year-old brother, who in June had been convicted of indecent assault on a young boy and had



"Yes, you're my best friend, and no, I'm not lending you forty thousand dollars."



been sentenced to serve two and a half years in the Massachusetts Correctional Institute, had appealed the conviction and was scheduled to appear in court that day. The tragic coincidence did not end with the fact that both Provost brothers could theoretically be in court on the same day for morals offenses concerning children; Kenneth Provost had been arrested just six days after Father Provost's picture-taking at the Gardner pool in January, 1992. James Reardon, who naturally wanted to prevent his client from being tainted by his brother's case, was able to have Father Provost's court date rescheduled, for January 28th.

Kenneth Provost, free pending appeal, had accompanied his brother on his court appearances, but the priest—whose picture had appeared numerous times in the local paper—was not on hand to sit with his brother on December 21st. After an unusually long conference with Joseph Brennan, Kenneth's

lawyer, and with Mary Gecewicz, the assistant district attorney who was prosecuting the priest's case (she handles a substantial share of the child-abuse docket), Judge Timothy Hillman emerged from his chambers to formally accept a plea bargain that had been struck. His face was flushed; he appeared to be fuming.

What went into that plea bargain—by which a two-and-a-half-year jail sentence became two years of probation—is indicative of what happens in numerous child-abuse cases. Kenneth Provost had been accused of four counts of rape and one of indecent assault of a boy under sixteen, and he was eventually convicted on the indecent-assault charge. (These assaults had occurred in Kenneth's house, where Father Provost later came to live after he returned from St. Luke and was awaiting trial.) In the process of Kenneth's appeal, the victim would have to retell the details of the assaults, which had taken place between July, 1988, and

September, 1991, when the boy was between ten and thirteen years old. At the time of the appeal, the boy—who the prosecution maintained at the trial had suffered severe psychological damage from the abuse—had been in a psychiatric hospital for a year. Plagued by depression and having attempted suicide on more than one occasion, he was considered by the prosecution to be a shaky witness at best. Furthermore, his doctors said, his ongoing treatment could be jeopardized by an appearance in court, in which he would have to relive the attacks. Hence the plea bargain was struck.

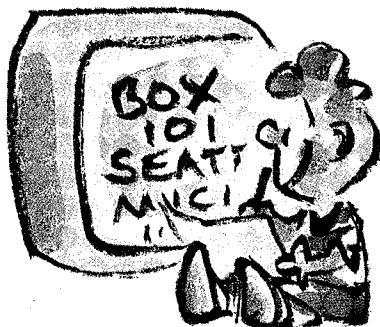
From the bench, Judge Hillman, whose disposition on the bench is typically that of a bemused and patient uncle, addressed Kenneth Provost in short, choppy sentences, his voice edged with a barely contained anger. The defendant was not to go near the victim, his family, or other young children; his probation would be strictly supervised; and, as a condition of proba-

THAT'S EDUTAINMENT

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tion, Judge Hillman demanded that he attend group-counseling sessions for convicted sex offenders who still deny their guilt.

In preparation for disposing of such a case, the court often orders for itself a standardized evaluation for aid in sentencing, known in courthouse shorthand as 15(e). This was done in Kenneth Provost's case. The evaluator noted that Kenneth was a defensive subject who claimed to have no sexual interests, was fearful of the many diseases he believed women carried, and said he confined his erotic life to masturbating over pictures of women. The 15(e) went on to paint a picture of Kenneth Provost as a man who unequivocally denied that he had abused the boy, maintained that he was actually helping the troubled youth, and claimed that if anything had happened it was inadvertent, an accident. Reference was made to his brother, Ronald, during the evaluation. Another family member had portrayed both Provost brothers as victims—they were being persecuted for doing good, for helping others.

A YEAR and two weeks after Father Provost took the pictures in the swimming-pool locker room, his trial was finally at hand. On January 28th, shortly before ten o'clock, Father Provost stood to answer a series of questions intended to insure that he understood, in waiving his right to be tried by a six-member jury, that he would be found guilty or not by one man—his interlocutor of the moment, Judge Daniel Toomey. Father Provost's eyes were red-rimmed, and a tongue of hair that had escaped his combing projected from the back of his head. He answered in a quiet and even voice that he was taking medication—Elavil, Prozac, and Depo-Provera (the first two drugs are antidepressants, and the other is a sex-drive suppressant)—and that they did not impair his ability to understand the proceedings. After hearing the opening arguments, Judge Toomey called the first witness. His name rang through the high-ceilinged courtroom. The tall, wide doors at the rear of the chamber swung open to reveal a small boy, blinking as he moved from the dim corridor into the brightly lit room. A television camera from the

local cable station recorded his promise, as he raised his right hand, to tell the truth and then followed him to the witness stand. Dressed in dark trousers, a white shirt, and a dark tie, wearing his dark blond hair in a mushroom cut, the boy who had appeared in Exhibits B through M as an aggressive participant seemed in person more like a choirboy. He stood up straight, his hands behind his back, and began to answer the questions of the prosecutor, Mary Gecewicz.

His voice was so low that the judge leaned forward and James Reardon moved to the edge of the empty jury box to hear his answers. The St. Joseph's youth group had gone for a swim, the boy said, and after a while he wanted to change into his street clothes. Father Provost, who had a camera strung around his neck, with which he had taken a few pictures in the pool area, accompanied him to the locker room. The boy asked the priest to hold a towel so that he could dress in private. The priest at first held the towel, shielding him (although there was no one else nearby), but then folded the towel over his arm and raised the camera to eye level. He began to take pictures.

The boy testified that on seeing the camera he had "posed" for the priest and had "moonied." He said that the priest had not spoken to him while taking the pictures. After the man who was lifting weights happened to walk by and confronted the priest, the boy had dressed quickly. On his way out of the pool, he had said something to Father Provost. The boy testified, "I told him that he'd better throw away those pictures."

"And what did he respond to you, if anything?" Gecewicz asked the boy.

"He said, 'Don't worry, I will.'"

James Reardon chose not to cross-examine the boy.

In the afternoon, as the boy sat with his relatives in the courtroom, a string of other witnesses provided the necessary backdrop to the alleged crime. The boy's mother, dressed entirely in black, testified that she had taken her other son to a wrestling match, and had returned home late in the evening of January 11, 1992, before her younger son came back from the swimming pool. He had said nothing of the picture-taking. As she left the witness stand, fists clenched, the

woman stared fixedly at Father Provost, and as she passed by the defense table where he sat she rapped her knuckles angrily on the table in front of him.

The weight lifter, Leo Nass, testified that the string of picture-taking had seemed wrong to him, and that he had confronted Father Provost, who had angrily maintained that the boy was dressed.

Detective Sergeant Richard Morrissey, who had investigated the matter, told again how Father Provost had meekly and voluntarily brought the camera, containing the undeveloped film, to the police station, and had then gone with him back to the rectory. There he had led the detective to the mantel near his bed. On it was a large brown envelope containing a collection of photographs of young boys, in various states of dress and undress, which he had taken over the years. According to the detective, who had informed Father Provost of his rights, the priest "said that he did have a problem, that he'd had it for about twenty years, and he said that ten years ago he was—"

At this point, James Reardon rose quickly to object. Morrissey could possibly be ready to allude to or openly reveal Father Provost's therapy at the House of Affirmation, which he underwent after the pictures were found at the Mount Carmel rectory. Such a revelation would show a pattern of child pornography—a pattern that no lawyer would want established.

The judge asked Gecewicz what she anticipated the response would be.

"I expect his response to be that Father Provost indicated

to Sergeant Morrissey that about ten years ago he was summoned to the bishop's office about his problem, and that he was sent away for treatment. No more specifics than that."

After a meeting at the bench with the judge and the prosecutor, Reardon returned to the defense table. Judge Toomey sustained the objection; Morrissey was instructed to address only the specifics of the charge before the court.

While the witnesses testified, Father Provost sat immobile, his head at an angle, his stare fixed on a faraway corner of the room. He looked neither at the witnesses nor at Reardon, and Reardon spoke not at all to his client.

Later in the afternoon, as Gecewicz

attempted to have entered as evidence the more than a hundred pictures confiscated from Father Provost's room, Reardon again rose to object. Another conference at the bench followed, and again Judge Toomey sustained the objection: the collection of pictures had no bearing on the single count of posing a child in the nude for which the priest was being tried.

In midafternoon, all the witnesses having been called, the trial was adjourned for the day; closing arguments were scheduled for the next day at 2 P.M. At the defense table, Reardon was cautiously optimistic. The day had gone as well as he could have hoped: the boy had used the word "posed"; neither Father Provost's earlier treatment nor the hun-

dred pictures had been allowed in the record. James Reardon had successfully isolated those two or three minutes of picture-taking in Gardner as though they were a single, aberrant—even accidental—episode in Father Provost's life. When a reporter asked why Reardon had opted not to have a jury, he answered with a guffaw. He is a huge man, with the look of a younger Tip O'Neill. "They would have convicted the defendant *and* his lawyer," he said.

The next afternoon, the defense counsel moved for a required finding of not guilty, claiming that the evidence and the testimony presented had shown that Father Provost meant no malice, and that, in fact, the boy had voluntarily posed for him. There were no sex acts depicted, the boy was not placed on a bed in a suggestive pose, he said. No, Gecewicz countered angrily, but there was lascivious intent. The motion was



S. GRASS

"But, first, my impression of Mussolini."

overruled; the decision was near. Only the closing arguments remained.

Mary Gecewicz, a large woman with tinted blond hair surrounding a girlish face, had been a meticulous prosecutor, sometimes making her case ploddingly, certainly with none of the ease and flamboyance of James Reardon. Now she became impassioned, demanding vengeance for a crime visited upon a young boy by a person he had grown to trust. "Father Provost, Your Honor, picked and chose his photos," she said. "He saw the boy undressing. He saw the boy putting on his underwear. He saw his genitals hanging out and he snapped the photos." In a hushed voice, she continued, "He *used* him, he encouraged him. . . . Your Honor, I ask you to look at those photos. They speak for themselves." She held up eight-by-ten-inch blowups of the pictures, declaring, "That boy—when he's pulling down his underwear with his buttocks exposed . . . with his underwear on, it's pushed to the side where you clearly can see his genitals—that boy is not fully clothed, Your Honor." In his summation, Reardon, although his narrow, technical defense had been virtually perfect, stated that be-

cause of the attendant publicity of the Provost case "I know we have the heavy oar." He went on to lay out the specifics of the pornography statute, and, looking at the judge, whom he has known for years, he said, "I would say to you were you and I to have some coffee in the days when lawyers would talk about things like that . . . we would have to say that there must be in your mind, sir . . . there must be some reasonable doubt in this."

Once the summations were over, Judge Toomey took no time to ponder his decision. The defendant was asked to stand. Father Provost supported himself with his extended fingers, which shook, resting upon the table before him. Judge Toomey handed a sheet to the clerk, and the clerk read, "The defendant, Ronald Provost, is guilty as charged." Father Provost stood in place, swaying slightly, his eyes momentarily darting from side to side, as if he had been struck and sought to regain his bearings. The only audible noise came from the boy's parents and grandparents—a release of pent-up breath. They reached out to hug each other.

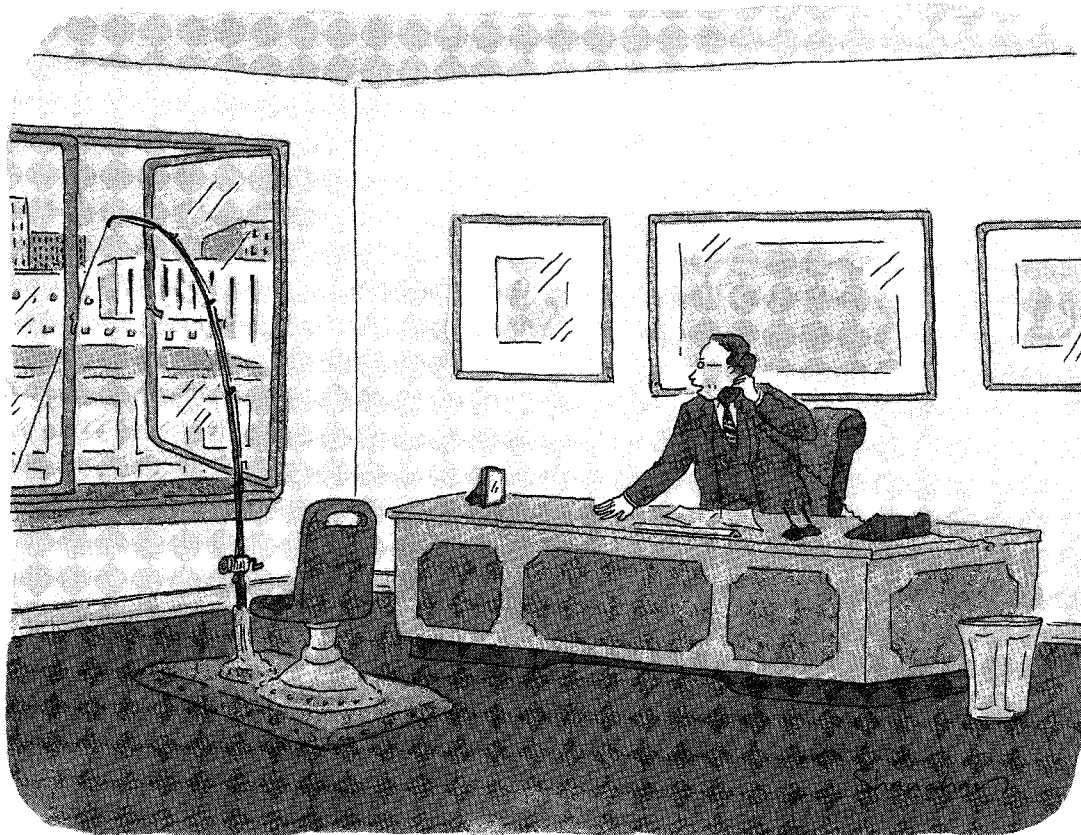
Before sentencing, the boy's father,

as was permitted by Massachusetts law, read an "impact statement" that his wife had written, which bitterly castigated the priest, told of the horrors of the past year and of the therapy their son was now undergoing, and concluded by saying, "I feel that every time he looked and photographed my son, he was raping him with his eyes."

The boy's head, which had bowed slightly when the defense counsel spoke of his willingness to pose, and had drooped still further as Mary Gecewicz thrust the blowups into the air for all to see, now trembled slightly. He was crying. Father Provost's glazed eyes appeared to be focussed on some point outside the room. Gecewicz asked for a sentence of ten years in prison, Reardon for a period of probation and for time in which to produce Father Provost's reports from St. Luke and to document his need for continuing therapy—therapy that could best be had outside prison.

TWO weeks later, in still another courtroom—which had a full-sized reproduction of Michelangelo's statue of Moses as lawgiver guarding its portals—Father Ronald Provost was sentenced to ten years in the Massachusetts Correctional Institute at West Concord, with five years of the sentence suspended outright and the other five years to be a period of probation. Father Provost was not to go near this child or any child under sixteen; his future employment would have to be cleared with his probation officer; and he was to continue his outpatient therapy. James Reardon had assured the court that his client would never function again as a priest. (Provost has now filed an appeal of his conviction.)

But Father Provost was a free man. And, although he would not function as a priest, by canon law



"Gotta run, Peter. A new client is on his way up."

he was still considered a priest and as such would receive his full pay from the Diocese of Worcester.

As Father Provost left the courtroom, the mother of the boy confronted him before the statue of Moses. "At least you could have said you're sorry. Sorry! Do you hear me?" she said, her smoldering eyes fixed on the priest.

Father Provost gave that vague smile I had seen so many times. "I'd love to apologize," he said, his voice flat. But he did not. He hurried past her to join Reardon down the hall.

DESPITE the sorry fact that Father Provost's case is but a minor ripple on a storm-tossed sea of allegations, indictments, and trials which the Catholic Church faces these days, it would have been reassuring to hear that my local church was at last honestly facing the reality of child molestation by its priests. (The Archdiocese of New York, which appears to have had comparatively few cases of child abuse, did take a decisive first step last week, when John Cardinal O'Connor summoned all archdiocesan parish priests—more than a thousand—to a two-day meeting on the problem.)

But, in an illustration of the Diocese of Worcester's unwillingness to deal forthrightly with this issue, its report of Father Provost's conviction was relegated to a page-five story in the *Catholic Free Press* headlined "SENTENCING SET IN PHOTO INCIDENT." On the front page of the paper was the announcement of a twenty-fifth-anniversary celebration in June of Timothy Harrington's consecration as bishop; Auxiliary Bishop Rueger and Monsignor Tinsley were to be the coördinators, the story said. Another story announced a planning meeting of Worcester priests, at which they would first try to determine "what it means to be a priest in the Worcester diocese" and then, it was hoped, move on to "begin to address the needs of the Church as a whole."

Those needs at the moment do not include a public apology to that young boy and his family, or an offer to pay for his therapy as he tries to sort out what has happened to him.

According to his family, he now runs away from home when frustrated; formerly an open and accepting child, he now fears adult strangers, and fanta-



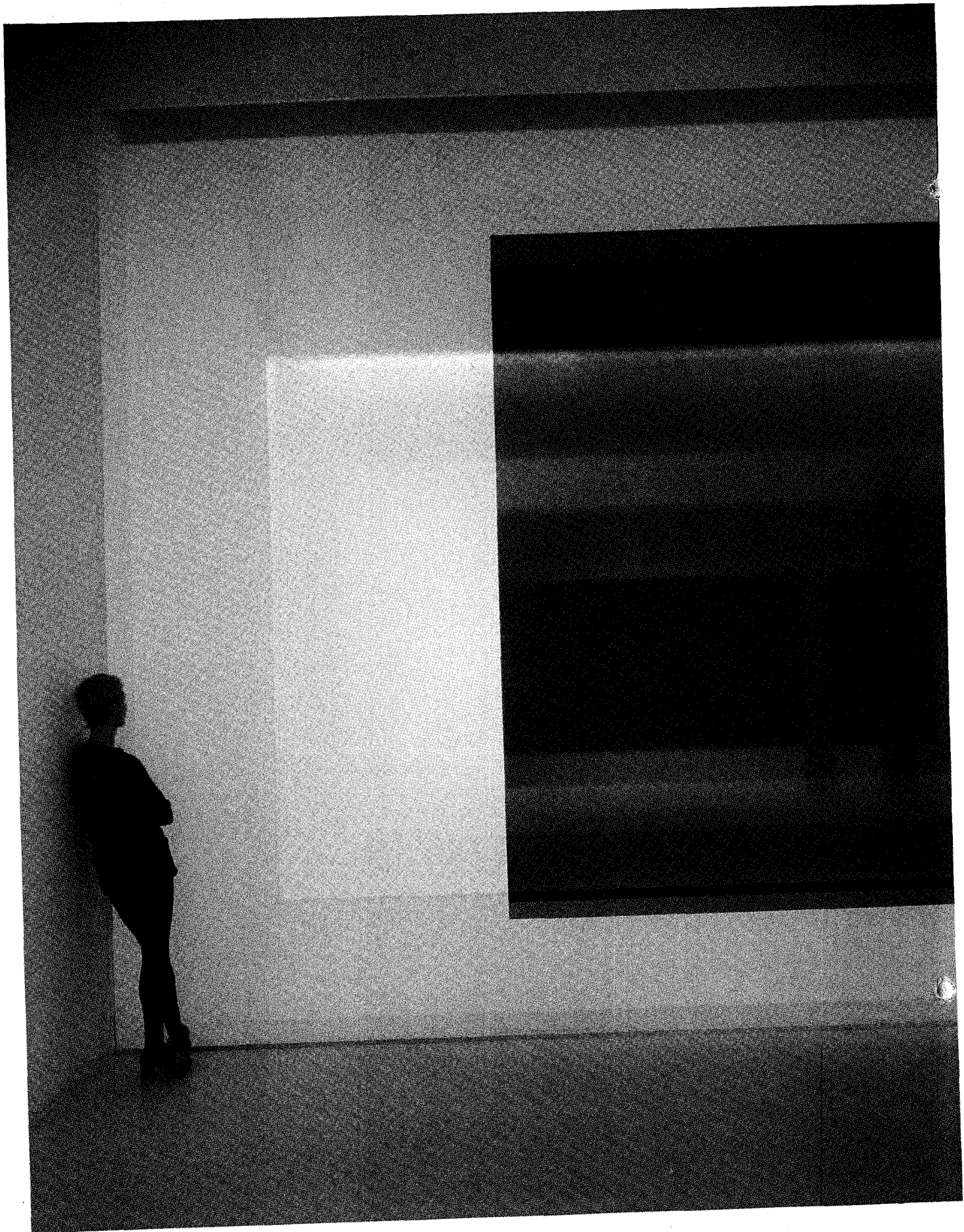
"Pardon me, Officer. Could you direct us to the New York that's illustrated in this brochure?"

sizes that they are murderers and robbers.

The Church that claimed moral authority over his life ultimately resorted to protecting itself from him in a court of secular law. A priest who each Sunday had proclaimed the word of God from a pulpit—and asked us to be bound by it—had sat mute throughout his trial. A civil suit naming Father Provost and Bishop Harrington was filed in the wake of the criminal conviction. The suit, which asks for unspecified monetary damages, alleges that the priest "had informed the Diocese prior to his having committed the complained-of acts that he recognized that he had a psychiatric problem and needed assistance in dealing with it," but that "the Diocese did not take sufficient action to safeguard the general public and the minor plaintiff from harm."

The Sunday after Father Provost was sentenced, as the factory workers,

farmers, secretaries, teachers, housewives, and computer-firm employees who make up our small parish gathered for Mass, I walked down into the basement room at St. Augustine's. There, on the wall, Father Provost's photograph was still in place, his vague smile directed not at us but at a point somewhere over our heads. His last words to that anguished, frustrated mother as he was about to walk free were still haunting me: "I'd love to apologize." His photograph and those words seemed an apt metaphor for the way many of us perceive the Catholic Church in these distressing times: distant, unconnected, not meeting its people eye to eye; pretending that somehow the embarrassments of the moment will pass, and the Church will once again reign supreme, without being called upon to confess its own sins and do something about them. ♦



ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

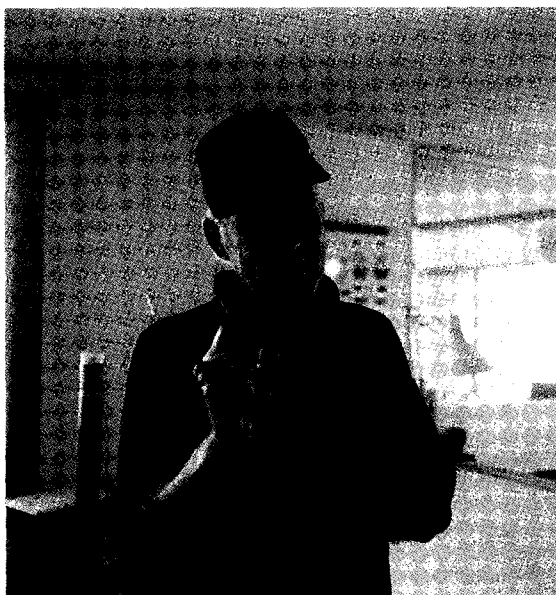
IN A DESERT OF PURE FEELING

How do you mount a retrospective of an artist like Robert Irwin, most of whose works do not exist—with the exception of those which do but cannot be moved—and whose main subject is what is going on behind, not in front of, the viewer's eyeballs? In Los Angeles, they're trying.

BY LAWRENCE WESCHLER

SEVERAL months back, when I heard that the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles was preparing to launch a major touring retrospective of the work of the contemporary artist Robert Irwin this June (the first such exercise since 1977, when the Whitney attempted a less complete version), I was initially confounded, for the idea of a Robert Irwin retrospective veritably basks in contradiction. The essence of Irwin's work is experience—how it presents itself at the moment it is being experienced—but most of that work, certainly the work of the last two decades, isn't really there to be experienced, because it no longer exists (it was intended to last only a week or a month) or because it never existed (it never even got built) or because, even if it does still exist, it can't be transported from place to place to be reexperienced. And the reason it can't be transported from place to place is that—perhaps more than with the work of any other artist—it simply *is* the place.

Photographs exist—diagrams, blueprints, models. But, in a profound sense, these have nothing whatever to do with the work. For a long time, back during the sixties, Irwin forbade the photographing of his work—and this was when he was still making objects (paintings and disks) of the sort that at least could have been photographed. Photographs, he felt, would inevitably capture nothing of what the work was about and everything that it wasn't. Photographs, that is, could at best convey the work's image but never its presence. And presence—immediate, phenomenal experience; not a metaphor for pres-



ence but presence itself—has with ever-growing urgency been the focus of Irwin's concern.

Words exist—anecdotes, analyses, recapitulations—and, indeed, it is one of the many paradoxes surrounding this particular master of the ineffable that he himself is immensely loquacious, even garrulous, expansively opinionated, at times prolix. But the point is that the work is all about the sort of attention that *precedes* verbalization. In 1982, when I completed a biography of Irwin, I adapted a line of Paul Valéry's ("Seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees") as the book's title, in part because that kind of struck-dumb attentiveness was precisely the sort of experience to which Irwin's works were increasingly aspiring, but also because my text constituted a record of all the usual components of artmaking—image, line, focus, frame, signature, naming, the requirement of making itself—that

Irwin had had sequentially to jettison, to bracket out, to *forget*, before he himself was able to see. Being here now is what Irwin is all about—*getting* here now, and not talking about it. And yet "getting here" breeds talk—his, ours—and there is in Irwin's work all sorts of stuff to talk about. As I say, the entire enterprise basks in contradiction.

IRWIN himself is one of the most interestingly and fruitfully contradictory figures on the art scene today, as I quickly recalled not long ago when I flew out to San Diego to visit him. Which is to say, he has hardly changed at all. Los Angeles has changed, or so he was telling me as we eased out of the airport parking lot in his 1982 Cadillac, a sleek black boat of a car. (In 1982, in L.A., he had been driving a 1972 *silver* Cadillac.) The traffic has got completely out of hand up there, and the freeways are perpetually clogged, he explained, and that condition eliminates one of the chief attractions the place used to hold for him. He left L.A. about ten years ago, in part to get away from the traffic and in part to get away from the jabber of the art scene, settling first in Las Vegas, and eventually in San Diego. "One of the nice things about this place," he was saying—but then we suddenly veered into the parking lot of a Winchell's doughnut shop, and he said, "Just a second, right back." He hopped out of the car, entered the shop, and emerged a few seconds later, bearing two cups of Coke, one of which he handed to me. Irwin is never really at home in any new city until he has tracked down the place with the perfectly calibrated Cokes—a project that

PHOTOGRAPHS OF ROBERT IRWIN IN SAN DIEGO AND OF HIS MOST RECENT NEW YORK INSTALLATION, AT THE DOWNTOWN PACE GALLERY LAST FALL, BY JOEL MEYEROWITZ.



"And before you know it you're looking at everyone as a commission."

usually takes several weeks of assiduous field research. "As you can see, I've found my source," he said. He re-started the car. "One of the nice things about San Diego is that I've managed to find a neighborhood that's an awful lot like L.A. in the fifties," he went on: "Very laid-back and stable. A lot of my neighbors work nearby, in the sailmaking shops and other businesses nestled along the water. As you can see"—we were now approaching the Point Loma district, straddling the hills that overlook the mouth of San Diego Bay—"real nice in-and-out. You can wake up in the morning, walk out on the deck, and see what kind of day it's going to be. It could easily make you happy if you didn't watch yourself."

The Cadillac coasted into a small underground garage. We got out and took the elevator to the apartment building's third (top) floor and then strolled along an airy exterior walkway to the apartment that he shares with Adele Feinstein, his wife of three years. (She was away that week, visiting relatives back East.) A profusion of thriving cacti

and other succulents crowded the welcome mat at his front door. The apartment itself was bright, white, wonderfully airy, with wide windows facing the bay, mirrors multiplying the wide bay view, unexpected skylights pouring forth their own airy spray of sky. A sliding glass door opening out onto a narrow balcony had the look of being kept permanently open. More cacti spread across the balcony deck. There was, as before, elsewhere, no art on the walls—not Irwin's own and not anybody else's. There were, as there had been in his Los Angeles quarters, several Plexiglas vitrines containing an astonishing array of mounted butterflies, in an almost delirious variety of hues and patterns. But the main impression was of the bay—the great, wide bowl of light.

"There's a real magical quality to this bay," Irwin was now saying. In the distance, on the water's far shore, the skyscrapers of downtown San Diego glistened in the afternoon sun, and beyond them loomed the low brown mountains of Mexico. "And the main feature of it is its absolute silence. This is a terrifically

busy harbor. The Navy has the place churning all the time. I can sit here and watch the fleet coming in and going out at all hours of the day. Sometimes one of the big carriers will float in—so big, so close you feel you could just lean out and touch it. It seems to take up the entire visual field. *And not a sound.* Absolute silence. I don't know why—maybe it has to do with the surrounding topography, the baffle of the hills—but it's as if the bay just swallowed up all the noise." A flock of pelicans floated by in the mid-distance; closer in, a hummingbird darted and froze before a feeder dangling from the balcony's rafters.

Irwin's broad, slightly angled drafting table faced the view, and, as usual, it was teeming with drawings for new projects. That day, he was working on a proposal for a roundabout in a new residential subdivision outside Las Vegas. He was proposing to place a gently sloping mound at the roundabout's center, and for the top of the mound—"Look at this here," he said. He pulled out some blown-up photographs of a desert hill-scape. "I was taking a walk a few weeks ago in the desert, and I began climbing this hill, and suddenly there these things were: an entire ridge, hundreds of yards, of these towering reddish-black monoliths, wedged, jammed one up against another, like a procession of elders, like Stonehenge, like Easter Island. Incredible things: look at the subtle gradations of color. It turned out that they were all part of a quarry. I came down the hill, tracked the quarry guy down, and made a deal: tied up the entire ridge. I'm not sure what I'm going to do with them, but I've been eying this mound in Las Vegas."

Stacked on the floor about his drafting table were books on desert rocks and samples of desert rocks. Reference works on landscaping (everything from Xeriscapes to bougainvillea) were piled on top of manuals on civil engineering. Under a table behind him Irwin had piled drawing tubes, vaguely sorted by project. Large zippered folios and Federal Express envelopes leaned against the wall, along with a bolt of diaphanous white scrim and a rolled swath of lavender narrow-gauge chain-link fencing.

Our conversation ranged easily from one recent or forthcoming project to the next, but the project that Irwin kept returning to was Miami International Airport.

"That one started the way most of them do," Irwin recalled as he went over to the pile, pulled out a few of the tubes, and started to unfurl the scrolls inside. "They'd got themselves into a jam, and now they were calling out for help. It was another one of those legally mandated one-per-cent-for-art situations which seem to constitute the basis for most of the public art that gets done nowadays. Invariably, it all happens fairly late in the game, when most of the construction and design decisions have been made, and usually they just want some statue or monolith, or something, they can jam into the middle of the place so that they can say there, they've done it, they've made the requisite bow to culture. In fact, in this case they already had their object—a huge James Rosenquist called 'Star Thief,' or something. And everything was going along just fine until Frank Borman, the ex-astronaut, who was heading Eastern Airlines at the time, came along—this was all a few years back, when Eastern Airlines still existed and Miami was one of its busiest airports. Anyway, Borman saw this mural and supposedly proclaimed, 'I never saw any slab of bacon flying around in outer space'—a quote that, incidentally, he denies making. But, whatever he said, the whole thing collapsed, and now they were back to starters."

That was the point at which Irwin was called in. "The county arts commission was headed at the time by an interesting lady named Patricia Fuller, and she saw this as an occasion for a dialogue," he said. "So she sent me an invitation. Now, I get a lot of invitations these days. I get them all the time, and there's generally something a little forlorn about them, because usually the project ends up consuming a lot of time and work and then falling through, for one reason or another. Still, it's what I do. I'm like a fire horse. The bell rings and I'm off to the races, champing the bit."

Irwin accepted the invitation. "This was an interesting situation," he told me. "I went and looked it over, and afterward I kept on thinking about it. The airport was chaotic, incredibly chaotic. One thing it sure as hell didn't need was more clutter, another object—art. What it was crying out for, though, was an over-all approach. It seemed a perfect occasion for looking at the situation of public art generally, which is in similar

disarray. An airport was a perfect late-twentieth-century case study—teeming with transience and cross-purposes and disarray. In truth, the whole challenge was so vast it was almost forbidding."

Irwin went on, "For a good while, though, I had been longing for something exactly like this. I mean, I had been stumbling along, doing relatively small projects here and there, picking up all these little insights along the way. And Miami was now affording me an opportunity to take stock. It was a little like making the transition from doing little paintings to doing big paintings. It can be a very scary prospect. But one day you just have to take a big canvas, tack it to the wall, and take a whack at it. And that's what Miami became for me."

Patricia Fuller soon moved on to other venues, but Irwin persuaded her successor, Cesar Trasobares, and the airport's director, Dick Judy, to allow him to invite two of his longtime friends and collaborators, Coy Howard and Ed Wortz, in for a visit. The three of them holed up in the airport hotel for a week, roaming the place, exploring the city, analyzing the situation, and dissecting its possibilities.

Part of the challenge was that of airport architecture itself. Irwin asked me, "Have you ever noticed how there have been hardly any successful airport structures over the past several decades—especially when you compare what's been built with the achievement of railroad architecture toward the end of the last century? Several of those urban train stations, with their vaulted interiors, were incredible buildings—the girding, the light, the sense of space, the sense of *occasion*. Trains were wonderfully powerful metaphors—of time and distance and journey, of setting out and return, of anticipation and adventure—and the architecture gloried in all that. With airports, because most people are actually afraid of flying, I suppose, it's as if the architecture became keyed to downplaying and disguising, and even masking, the essential nature of the experience. The buildings became nondescript, their interiors like shopping malls, or like living rooms, for God's sake. It was as if the designers were doing everything possible to keep you from seeing the airplanes as they arrived and departed—you almost had to

make a special effort. The entries into the planes themselves were completely swathed in those windowless sheaths—you were, in effect, invited to move from one living room into another. God forbid you should notice you'd entered a plane. I mean, think about it. Name a single distinguished airport building of the last twenty years. The United terminal in Chicago, maybe. And what's that? It's a *railway station*!"

Beyond that generic problem, the Miami airport had problems of its own. Built mostly during the fifties, it was plagued by low ceilings and cramped corridors that tended to defy renovation. It was tremendously crowded, one of the busiest terminals in the country. "Actually, it's a terrific people place," Irwin continued. "You've got the New York-Florida vacation axis. All the people heading out to the Caribbean, or radiating out through the Southeast. It's the main air gateway to Latin America, so you've got people going to and from there, making connections to all over the country and on to Europe. For some reason, because of the timetables for the Latin-American connections, there can be unusually long layovers between flights. So you've got all these people just milling around, waiting. A great place for people-watching. Only, it's completely disorganized, and it doesn't really lend itself to that sort of activity at all."

Beyond that, Miami's airport, like most airports, is completely without a sense of place. "It could just as well have been in Cleveland, for all the local cues it was giving off," Irwin said. "South Florida is one of the richest areas of the country in terms of history and geography and flora and fauna and the quality of the light and general civic liveliness and public myths. Tremendously suggestive. It's just that none of it seems to have suggested anything to the airport's planners."

Irwin and his friends delved deep into the character of the place and spent many hours exploring the character of its opportunities. They thought a lot about the divergence in the ways that an artist, on the one hand, and an architect-designer, on the other, usually approach such challenges. The architect-designer's main goals, after all, are to solve problems and minimize anxiety, whereas the



artist wants to celebrate opportunities and maximize richness. Each, of course, subsumes the other's goals as his own secondary motives, and it ought to be possible to make the two complement each other, especially if they are allowed to collaborate at the outset. "Artists need to be in there from the start, making the argument for quality," Irwin now insisted, jabbing a finger at one of his charts. "The key to this thing is, for example, if you give an engineer a set of criteria which does not include a quality quotient, as it were—that is, if this sense of the quality, the character of the place, is not a part of his original motivation—he will then basically put the road straight down the middle. He has no reason to curve it. But if I can convince him that quality is absolutely a worthwhile thing and we can work out a way in which the road can be efficient and also wander down by the river, then we essentially have both: he provides quality in that the road works, I provide quality in that it passes by the river. In that way, art gets built into the criteria from the beginning rather than being added on afterward. In many cases, it may not cost any more, or just a bit more, for the road to wander by the river. As opposed to, say, giving the artist one per cent afterward—which is, hell, just tokenism to the *n*th degree. The best they're going to be able to do is put in a few doodads.

"But if you affect this whole process from the beginning by putting in place some quality criteria and you look around and ask yourself who in this society are trained to make this argument for quality, the only ones that I can think of are artists. We're the only ones with no real rationale for being except developing aesthetics, or quality—we have no other function. So our key role in our society right now—and what we're really talking about here is translating values into dollars—is for artists to make winning arguments for why considerations of quality are absolutely necessary."

Irwin pointed out that any given site in the airport—the baggage claim, the security checks, the corridors, the parking-lot kiosks, the check-in counters—partook of different combinations of requirements, and the contributions of designers and artists needed to be blended accordingly. But the opportunities for artistic contribution were enormous, even after the fact.

Irwin worked on his Miami scheme

ARISTOTLE AND THE CRAYFISH

We went to buy worms for bait
at a shop plainly announcing its purpose.

We found what we wanted:
fat, lively mealworms,

the kind the fish here seem to prefer.
In the middle of the room was a large

old-fashioned crock: blue, round, and filled with
tiny crayfish. My small son was disconsolate

at leaving those fabulous creatures.
We bought two and then released them

into our clean, sparkling aquarium
where the goldfish moved ponderously

like old poets in some illustrious academy. And behold,
there was a great darkness over all the land;

discussions and debates were conducted
beyond our comprehension; only eelgrass

floating to the surface bore evidence
of the struggle in the hidden depths.

for months—indeed, for years—developing arguments, formulating specific proposals, and, perhaps most crucial, winning the trust of airport officials, particularly that of Dick Judy. "When I first arrived," Irwin said, "I'm sure he wondered, Who is this guy, this artist, being foisted on me by those crazy art bureaucrats downtown? What standing could I claim in his eyes? What authority could I command? None. I was nobody. I was worse than nobody—I was an irritant." In time, however, Irwin did seem to win Judy's regard. Judy came to welcome his visits and listen to his arguments ever more intently.

Eventually, Irwin presented the arts commission and the airport's board with a detailed three-part proposal. To begin with, he offered an elaborate master plan, entirely reconceiving and revamping the flow of human traffic through the airport, from automotive approach through aerial dispatch and back. He then highlighted dozens of sites throughout this newly conceived facility where individual artists could be invited to work with designers on ways of enriching the specific qualitative features of the

separate sites; he outlined a procedure for identifying artists and matching them to sites; and he prepared a sheaf of impressionistic memos to be sent to the participating artists, offering information (and inspiration) on everything from South Florida history to climate conditions, quality of light, and diversity of native flora. Finally, he selected a single site for himself, in many ways the linchpin of the whole conception: he was proposing to tear out a dilapidated two-story garage at the center of the entire facility, surrounded by the entries to all the various terminals, and to replace it with a lush cypress grove. The grove would be layered, with varied native ferns, and with birds rising from marshy lake below. Above, in the canopy, pedestrian skyways would link the terminals to one another and to the relocated parking structure beyond. Scattered throughout, there would be benches and cafés—zones for quiet contemplation during those notoriously long layovers.

Irwin's audience seemed aghast at the sheer scale of the artist's vision. He recalled for me how, as he'd unfurled sev-

On the third day, the waters cleared once again.
It was as before. But there were no crayfish

to be seen. We decided they were living now
as hermits, in greater wisdom.

an existence reclaimed from public life
deep under the bottom strata.

That's how we left it, until one day
when I opened my Aristotle

and found the minute body of a crayfish,
flat like a plant in a flower press,

right at the passage where the Philosopher
speaks of memory and of recalling

past events. This chapter,
one of the best things anyone

ever wrote on memory, will
from now on be associated

with a smell not easily forgotten:
crayfish, somewhat decomposed.

—LARS GUSTAFSSON

(Translated, from the Swedish, by Yvonne L. Sandstrom.)

eral detailed drawings of his proposed grove, he'd told them, "This garden seems like a major commitment. In all sorts of ways, it seems like an extravagance. But if, back in the planning stages, I'd proposed that you take Manhattan and block off all the area between Fifty-ninth and 110th Streets, between Fifth and Eighth Avenues, and put a *park* there, you'd have been similarly appalled. You'd have told me, 'Impossible, too costly, utterly impractical, out of the question.' But if I'd then said, 'You have to do it. That park will be the heart, the very lungs, of the entire city; it will be the quality, the character of the whole place. You don't have a choice,' eventually you just might have come around."

They weren't sure what to make of such arguments. Meanwhile, Irwin also had to buck a whole range of bureaucrats with entirely different agendas. "They had one guy there whose job was 'liability management'—in other words, insurance," Irwin recalled. "Everything had to go across his desk—sewerage, road construction, lighting, baggage retrieval—and his job was to make sure the city was never liable. And now here I was, com-

ing along with this—what?—with *art*, for heaven's sake. Let me tell you, we shared no interests whatever. His principal interest was in seeing that nothing got done." But Dick Judy, for his part, was becoming increasingly interested. He gave Irwin the go-ahead for a first group of artists, including Alexis Smith, Richard Fleischner, Alice Aycock, and Joseph Kosuth, to visit the airport and develop proposals. By early 1989, he even seemed on the verge of giving the go-ahead to the entire scheme.

And then Judy, a veteran of more than twenty years of running the airport, one of the top people in international airport management, suddenly got fired. Or, rather, he "retired," on principle and under pressure, over some completely different issues. Three years of Irwin's painstaking cultivation of respect and regard were blasted to irrelevance, and the project quickly unravelled.

"So that was that," Irwin commented, with a sigh, and he began rolling up the diagrams and drawings and sliding them back into their tubes. "But it was a useful exercise, and one that helped me to crystallize my ideas on the future of art in

public places. I always make that distinction between public art and art in public places—it's a question of where you put the emphasis, where you locate the source. The question is how you can take art out into the world."

M IAMI was a staggeringly ambitious proposal, but one of the most astonishing things about it was its distance from the sort of thing Irwin had been doing ten, fifteen, twenty years earlier. Back then, he had dismantled the art act just about down to point zero. He had gone around saying that the way a tree's shadow fell across a patch of lawn was now art enough for him. He might frame that shadow with a piece of string, but he thought the piece of string was superfluous. And now here he was redesigning entire airports.

Could he have stopped, I asked him, back there at point zero? Would that have ever really been enough?

"Oh, absolutely," he replied, without a moment's hesitation.

Why hadn't he?

"People respond to their own stimuli. What happened to me—and it's why I have all these paradoxes today—is that I responded to the questions. There does come a point where you can simply withdraw from the world. But why do Zen monks teach? Why do they? If they're in Nirvana, what is that need or desire? Well, there's a stimulus there. Simply as human beings in a human context. Let's say I find total Nirvana, O.K.? I'm at point zero, in a perfect state of mind, with no need to do anything, O.K.? But I don't live in an enlightened world. So then come the questions, which inundate you right away—there are a number of stimuli, a number of possible responses. I could have become a teacher of Zen, of zero-ness; in fact, I could have even done it with my paintings. I could still be painting those paintings. That's something like what, say, Robert Ryman has done.

"But I was never really interested in zero-ness for its own sake. None of it was ever being done as a negation or a denial of the world. Those butterflies"—he pointed to the vitrines mounted on the wall—"it was during that very period when I was collecting them, corresponding with hobbyists all over the world, trading specimens. Amazing subculture. Sixteen hours a day, I'd be painting a cadmium-yellow line over a cadmium-

yellow surface. Two lines per surface, seven days a week. At the end of two years, I emerged with ten canvases. And then the dots, even more minimal—no lines whatever. Even more backbreaking—physically excruciating work. Nothing but dots. And the entire time I was collecting these butterflies. I *always* wanted all that richness. I just didn't know yet how to include it. It was never that I was denying it. I was merely holding it in abeyance.

"I ventured into zeroland because I was simply responding to the potential latent in a set of questions—the questions of modernism. I'm really interested in them. Without getting into a religious sort of zeal, or anything, I really think—I don't think modernism was an accident. I think it was an absolutely necessary development of civilization. I think that ultimately it constitutes the next level. Not the final one, but we're moving toward another level of sophistication, in which we still employ all the previous sophistications. Because that's the critical thing about modernism: it's not a rejection of other ideas; it's simply an extension, an expansion, a compounding toward a greater complexity."

LISTENING to Irwin's answer, I suddenly began to understand something about his work's trajectory. The key movement in the history of the past

several hundred years of art as far as he's concerned—the essence of what he describes as the upsurge, the *necessary* upsurge, of modernism—has been the collapse of figure and ground. Irwin often talks about the historical sequence that led to the compression of what was considered appropriate subject matter for a work of high art: initially, God alone; then Christ the man-God; then Christ the King; then this particular king; then this rich burgher; then the burgher's maidservant in her red shawl; then the red shawl by itself; and, eventually, just the color red. Toward the end of this five-hundred-year compression, he argues, the subject and its surround, the figure and the ground, began collapsing into each other—a process that culminated in and was the essence of Cubism. But this process wasn't accomplished through a bleaching out of the figure, through making the figure as undifferentiated as the ground around it. Rather, the ground was being heightened, was suddenly being attended to with all the focus previously reserved for the figure alone. The focus—the allowance for complexity—was being widened.

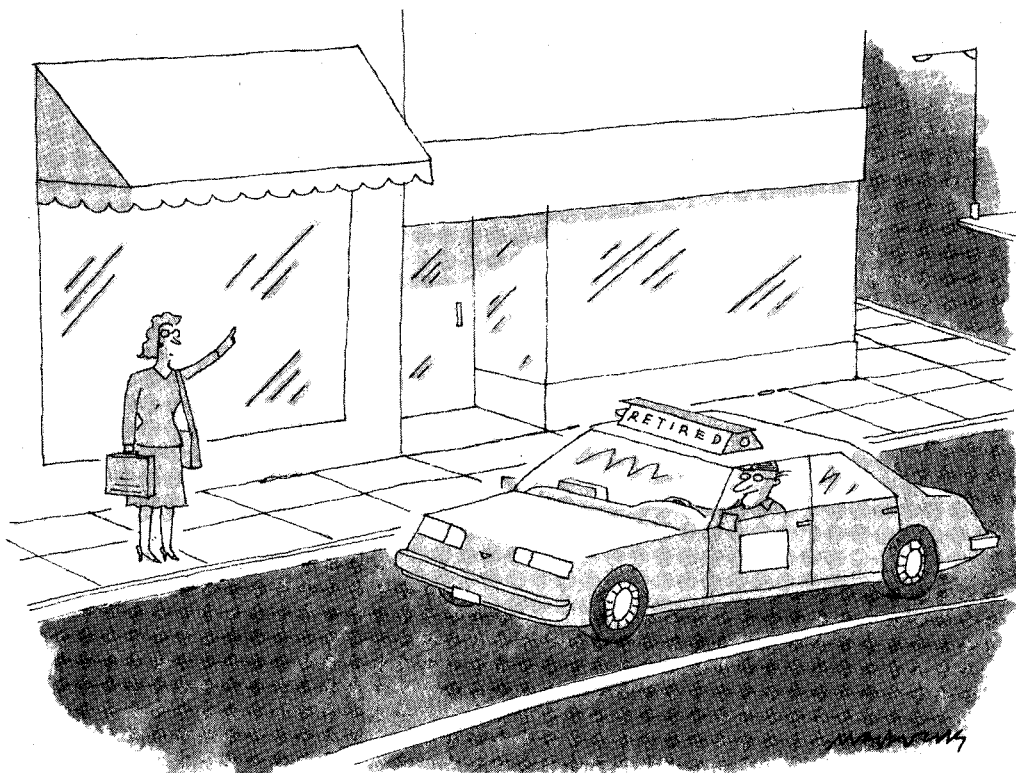
At a key moment in his own career (somewhere between his dot paintings of 1964 through 1966 and his disks of the following years), Irwin told me, he began to feel that such an ambition, such a dazzling achievement, could no longer

be confined to or contained within the world of the painting alone: to do so was merely to render the painting a figure against the wall's ground, whereas the whole point was to expand the viewer's capacity for complexity still further. In this sense, Irwin reasoned, the shadow that the painting cast had to be every bit as interesting—as loaded, phenomenally speaking—as anything going on inside the painting. Hence his own move out of the frame, onto seemingly blank walls and, presently, into near-empty rooms, construed as spheres for sublime aesthetic contemplation (or, rather, prior-to-contemplation: sublime attention, presence). The rooms weren't in fact empty, or, at any rate, innocent of significant intrusion; their dimensions and lighting and textures had all been modulated in subtle ways that, ideally, increased the observer's own sense of awareness without necessarily calling attention to themselves. But, even there, a problem remained, since the entire room still cried out to be thought of as a heightened figure amid the rest of the world's ground.

This progression led Irwin himself to point zero—that moment of virtual self-effacement in terms of his conception of himself as an artist, as a maker of objects, or even as a meddler in rooms. Once he had reached that state, he was able to abandon rooms altogether and go out into the desert and experience a

vista, without lifting a finger, without budging a pebble: that experience—enjoyed in all its richness and for all its complexity—contained every requisite element of the art act. He could come back into the city and delight himself in the way a random shadow fell across a random wall, savoring it to the point of total immersion. That was enough: that was more than enough.

Ten years later, though, and here Irwin was, lifting mountains, revamping entire airports, talking about recasting entire cities. How to account for such a staggering transformation? In a certain sense, hourglass-like, he had simply come out the other side: his ambitions had become as megalomaniacal as they had previously been spare. But in



another sense—and this is what I was now beginning to realize—the progression had been seamless, continuous; and it all had to do with this business of figure and ground. Coming out the other side didn't so much mean renouncing focus on the discrete art object (the figure, even the entire room as figure) as it meant pumping up awareness of that object's surround, which is to say engaging the whole world, attending to it with all the intensity normally reserved for art objects. This is how self-effacement becomes almost messianic in its ambitions.

But softly—at least in Irwin's case—softly. "If you asked me for the sum total, asked me, 'What is your ambition?'" Irwin now said, "basically, the answer is just to make you a little more aware than you were the day before of how beautiful the world is. This isn't saying that I know what the world should look like. It's not that I'm rebuilding the world. What artists do is to teach you how to exercise your own potential; they always have. That's the one thread that goes all the way through. I mean, within that there are other strains—the Christian, say, or the Communist—where people claim to know somehow (and this is not even bad; on the best level, it's well meant) how the world should be, and then they try to build it on the basis of some theory, which to me is a peculiar idea, like building your past into your future. What I'm saying is, God, it's all already out there. With any new situation, all you're trying to do is to tease out something of significance. You're not trying to form it from the outside—you're just trying to tease it out. The whole game is about attending and reasoning. In other words, you have to play it as it lays and keep it in play. Playing it as it lays and keeping it in play means you try to turn people on to themselves, making every moment as good as you can make it, but then they're responsible."

Turning people on to the world, in this view, means turning them on to the single most beautiful thing in the world: the human capacity, the human *responsibility*, for perception.

IRWIN'S ambition is at once spare and vast, as is his ego within that ambition: he himself wants to do merely the



"The usual? Or will you be having our 'stimulus package'?"

tinest thing, but that just happens to be the only thing that matters. And it's not even that he himself wants to do it. In his conversation, "I" and "you" regularly blur ("You're not trying to form it from the outside"), and this is no mere rhetorical evasion. Sometimes he refers to a "dialogue of immanence," by which he means the sense in which "certain questions become demanding and potentially answerable at a certain point in time, and how everyone involved on a particular level of asking questions, whether he's a physicist or a philosopher or an artist, is essentially involved in asking the same questions." He also calls this "the process of inquiry," the sense that people at the peripheries of their various disciplines are all engaged in pursuing the same subject—and that every single person, at any moment, has the capacity to transport him or herself to that periphery. These categories of activity, of intention, are, for Irwin, profoundly egoless. "You," "I," "he," "she" are all one. No signatures necessary, every signature superfluous.

And yet this egolessness of Irwin's can at times seem positively egomaniacal. For instance, a few minutes later we were talking about the idea of his having a retrospective. I reminded him of something that he had said to me more than ten years ago. At the time, we had been talking about the destruction by vandals of two of his dot paintings at the 1965 São Paulo Bienal—their tart

self-abnegation had evidently really irritated some viewers—and he had commented (as I quoted him in the book):

I suppose if I'd been in São Paulo while they were attacking the things, if I'd been right there, chances are I might have reacted strongly. But it had no reality for me. I mean, I'm told that some work I did a few years back is destroyed. O.K., conceptually I can say, "Oh God, there goes so many months' work, and there's my economics for the next year, and there goes my place in the world historically." You can run those through your head and respond to them if you want. But they have no actual reality, or didn't for me. I suppose I'm a terrible stepfather to the things I've done, but as far as I'm concerned, I have no children in the world. I can intellectualize that maybe they should be preserved. But I have a hard time assuming the importance of the thing. That's a big difference between a West Coast artist and a European. A European artist really believes in himself as part of that historical tradition, that archive. They see themselves as part of the stream of history, and they conduct themselves in that way, with a certain amount of importance and self-esteem and so forth. I guess people out here have gained that more now, but when I was growing up as an artist there simply wasn't any stream for you to orient yourself toward. Obviously, you think what you do is important, or you wouldn't be pursuing it with the kind of intensity you do. But the minute I start thinking about making gestures about my historical role, I mean, I can't do it, I have to start laughing, because there's a certain humor in that.

Given all that, I asked now, why bother with a retrospective?

Irwin was silent for a few moments,

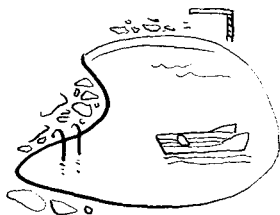
and then said, "Maybe this is an illusion of my own making, but I saw an exhibition one time in New York of Mondrian's entire career, and the thing that was amazing to me was that there was the full span of his career, from the flowers on out to the most incredible abstractions, and Mondrian was one of those few rare artists in which (a) there was this tremendous growth and change and (b) at the same time every step of it was there. I mean, whew!

You could just see it, you could see how each step evolved from the one before, how there wasn't any revolution, it was all a process of continually considered evolution, one that took him, step by step, all the way out. And I have a feeling that my work has some of the same character: I've gone a fairly long distance and done it step by step, and every step is there, exhibited. Maybe it's a bit more difficult to see, since it's not all in one medium, but it's all there."

Irwin paused, gazing out at the bay. A destroyer was cruising in silently, and sailboats were sprinting soundlessly about it. "And then there's this business of leaving a decent record," he went on. "I'm in a pretty hilarious position in that most of my work of the past twenty years doesn't even exist—most of it was never even built, and for the craziest variety of reasons. One place, the patron dies; another, the whole company goes bankrupt. My proposal for the French Olympics: complete failure of communication. I'm offering them this delicate, wispy gesture and their people start engineering the thing to death; I'm offering them a butterfly and they're engineering me an elephant. No wonder it falls through. Miami: the guy gets fired, or retires—whatever. I mean, it can get pretty comical. Here I am with this aesthetic utterly rooted in experience, and the pieces don't even exist."

"Up to now, I haven't cared all that much. I haven't given history—or, anyway, my own place in history—all that much thought. But I'm increasingly coming to realize that the kind of thing I'm really interested in I'm never going to see in my lifetime. Even if I still have twenty good years ahead of me"—Irwin will be sixty-five this September—"I can see that the kind of vision and practice I'm working toward is generations off."

Now, the previous generation left me a great record to work from—Mondrian, de Kooning. I didn't have to spend a lifetime coming to know them; the record was there, waiting for me when I was ready to assimilate it. Whereas my stuff, my offering, for the most part simply isn't going to be there to pass on, because—I don't mean to sound grandiose about it—almost all my more recent steps have essentially been erased. And



I guess I just feel that one has a responsibility as a human being to leave a good record. If I'd never seen a de Kooning except in a magazine, I'd have been operating from a bad record. Or like in "The

Double Helix"—why were Watson and Crick able to beat Pauling to the discovery of the structure of DNA? Because they had the lady's photographs and he didn't. They were working from better information."

He paused again, seeming to puzzle it all through. "Obviously, in a certain sense, doing a retrospective is a big step backward for me. I want to be over here—beyond Miami—and instead I'm back here, back in the very museums and galleries I forswore a long time ago. But it's all part of the same crazy contradiction of my entire enterprise these days. Because not only do the projects I want to do in the outside world generally fall through, for one reason or another, but also my ties to my source, to the art world, are beginning to fray. I'm doubly estranged: I fall between; I've become invisible to both worlds. And this retrospective is finally about the art world. It's about the fact that, despite my energy's being focussed over here, I remain tethered to my source, which is in the art world. And part of the thing about a tether is that when your tether gets tangled up you've got real problems: it starts spinning you in all sorts of bad directions; you'd better tend to it."

"Furthermore, you can go only as far as people are willing to entertain you. I can have the most far-out ideas, but if absolutely no one else takes them seriously I'm operating in a vacuum. One of the reasons I taught all those years was that it's very important that we all participate in the health of our disciplines. Whether or not I can get myself to take history seriously, I do take the health of my discipline very seriously. Disciplines

can shrivel up and die if they're not properly attended to. So, yes, with this whole retrospective exercise—or, for instance, with that scrim installation I did at the Pace Gallery's SoHo branch last fall—all right, I'm no longer pursuing the questions. But this sort of contribution is important as well. It's like the way Einstein sat down at one point and wrote a primer. At that point, he was no longer developing his own knowledge; he was accepting the fact that he was a human being in a human context and had some interest and some responsibility."

I mentioned the way Valéry's aphorism "Seeing is forgetting" had once served as an apt characterization of Irwin's entire course up to a certain point. How would he encapsulate the period since? What would be a good title for the retrospective?

"You know, something came to mind the other day," he replied. "Maybe not exactly what you have in mind, but I think it sums up the trajectory nicely: 'From Malevich to Tatlin'—Kazimir Malevich (1878-1935) and Vladimir Tatlin (1885-1953). 'Those Russian Constructivists—spectacular moment, particularly between 1915 and 1920, tremendous burst of creative energy. In a way, the work itself was quite crude. It's just as I always say: As the questions go up, the performance level goes down—and that's natural, since people don't yet know how to act on those questions, they're stumbling around in a fog—whereas when performance goes up the quality of the questions tends to go down. So, while the objects these guys came up with may not have been particularly sophisticated as objects—they weren't Stellas, or anything—they were absolutely loaded in other ways. Man, we're still feeding off their questions. Those guys were *soaring*."

"Malevich, of course, back around 1915 pared everything down to those empty white squares on their white ground. Everybody looked at those and moaned, 'Oh no, everything we love is gone.' And instead he replied, 'Ah, but we have found a *desert of pure feeling*!'—an incredibly philosophical thing to say. One could have easily equated those empty squares with the loss of God, the end of culture, the horror of death, and there's a whole artistic tradition that, in effect, does that: the existentialist tradition. But I'm convinced that Malevich

was drawing on the opposite tradition: the phenomenological. Instead of angst, he's telling you, 'Wonder! Wow! A desert of pure feeling!' And he's not talking about emotion—or, anyway, not just about emotion. He's talking about texture, about experience, about quality, about taking the feel of things."

I recalled the way Irwin used to talk about placing bets at the horse races—the principal source of his income back in the old days. He would start out by carefully surveying the quantifiable data, then blend in the more subtle, more intuitive, nonquantifiable kinds of information, and then run his hand over the entire race, trying to get a feel for the whole, and only then would he make his stab and place his wager.

"See, Malevich was keying on experience," Irwin said. "His was a desert in which experience is primary. If God is primary, then how you construct every argument is always by referring back to God, because that's the primary thing. But when he says 'a desert of pure feeling,' how I interpret that is, he's saying, 'I am primary, the human being is primary, and I refer everything back to me.' We're talking not about the thing but, rather, about the source of the thing—the responsibility of the observer, the perceiver. This was a profoundly philosophical moment, and he was acting it out inside his studio, within the confines of his canvas. And what Tatlin was doing at almost that exact moment was trying to take that way of being out into the world—trying to fashion a thing-in-the-world based on that same euphoric sense of human potential. Sure, it was purely a gesture, and, by the way, one of the oldest gestures there are, one of the oldest metaphors: a tower—the Monument to the Third International (1919). "Ever since human beings have stood on the earth, they've been building mounds and towers. But it was the same way it was with the

square: a pure gesture in the same way the square is a pure gesture. A gesture about soaring possibility: for a moment, all the chains were off and the human spirit was soaring.

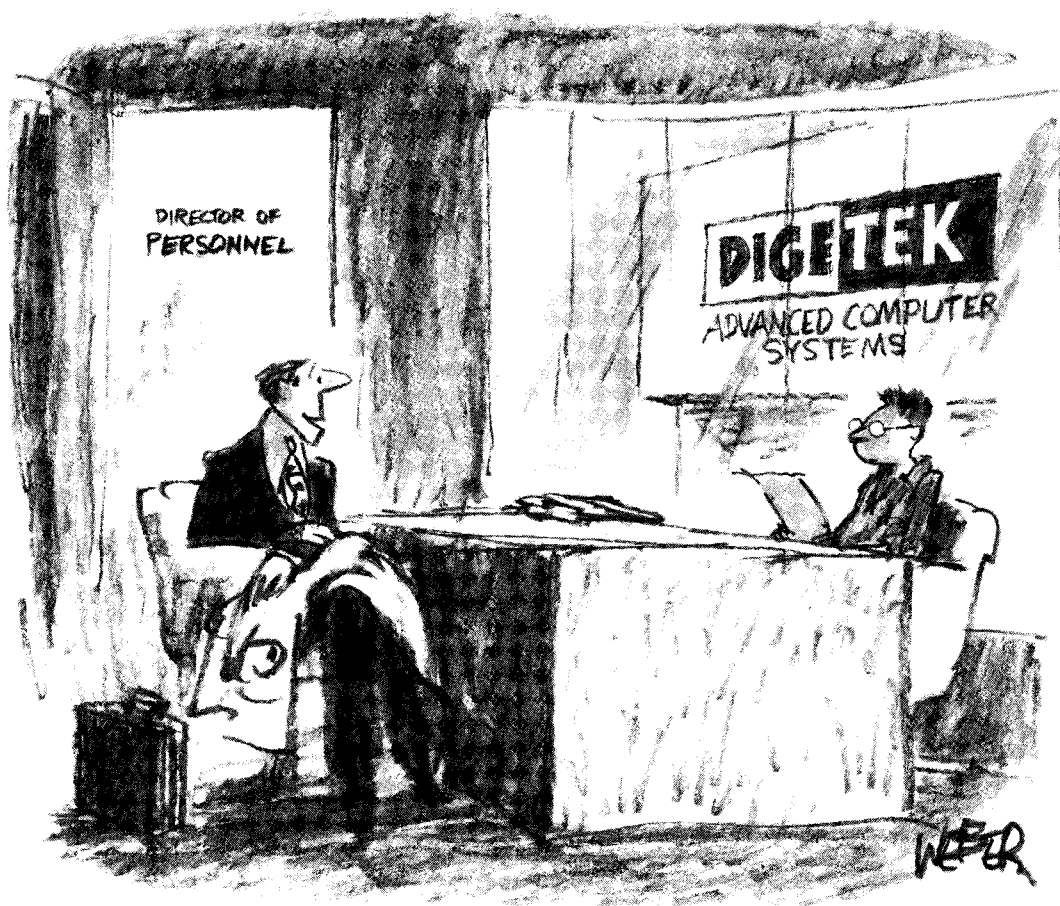
"Now, of course, in one sense they're the same, the square and the tower, but in another sense it's a big trip, it's a real journey. Because how, exactly, do you take those white squares—that 'desert of pure feeling'—and project their spirit out into the world? In a sense, my dot paintings were my Malevich equivalents, and the things I'm trying to do now are my Tatlin equivalents."

Malevich, Tatlin, Mondrian, de Kooning, Einstein, Watson, Crick, I found myself thinking: a fairly pricey neighborhood in which Irwin keeps insisting on pitching his tent. But, again, his is a strangely egoless egomania: in claiming these masters as his colleagues, he's not so much keying on his own importance as asserting the importance of the continuing dialogue. Irwin's sensibility is immensely playful, but the play is absolutely serious. If he speaks of Einstein and Watson, he's merely insist-

ing that art has both the right and the obligation to stake its claims as high as any science. And if he mentions Mondrian or Malevich he's merely insisting that artists today—the entire discipline—ought to cast their aspirations right up there with the heroes. Play it as it lays, and keep it in play.

"And, as I've been showing you, it's not that easy a trip, it's by no means obvious," Irwin went on, pointing to the pile of scrolled diagrams and blueprints. "I mean, as long as you confined it to the studio, where you had it in a kind of laboratory circumstance, you could limit the paradoxes, make the world appear any way you wanted it to, as long as you didn't expect anybody to agree. But the minute you put it under your arm and take it outside you run aground on all sorts of paradoxes—both the physical limitations and the limitations imposed by everybody else's ambitions and requirements. So that, in a way, with this retrospective I've momentarily retreated halfway back into the lab."

The trouble, I pointed out, is that the retrospective itself is not without its con-



"I'm in my forties, and it's my firm belief that Digetek could use someone in his forties to excellent advantage."

traditions, not the least of them being the absurd limitations imposed by the necessary substitution of models and photographs and wall renderings for actual physical experience.

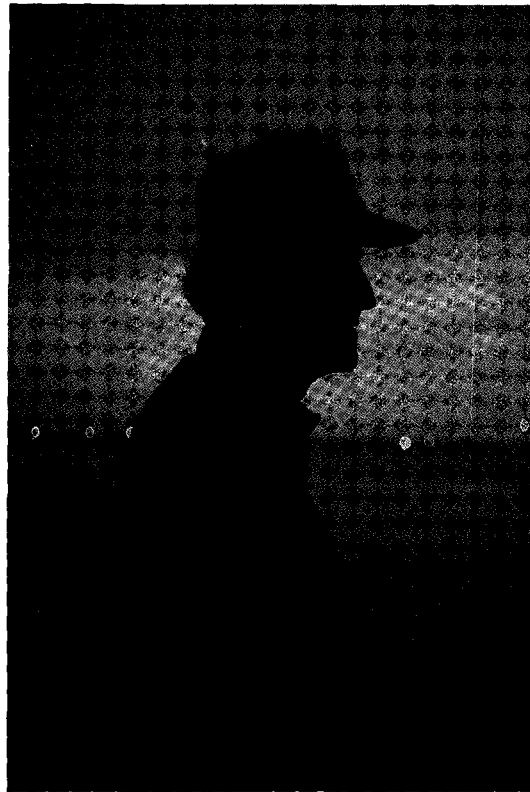
"Of course," Irwin concurred. "Of course. And, on top of that, these are models of pieces in radically different media: light and sound; dirt; steel and glass; scrim; chain-link; cacti and bougainvillea. At each of the show's stops"—it will move from L.A. to Cologne, Paris, Madrid, and finally to New York, to the Guggenheim, where it will alight in 1995—"I'll be erecting at least one site-conditioned piece, but they will all be entirely different, each responding to the conditions of its specific site. And what are people going to think? There are only two things they can think. The first is to assume, from any normal art-world perspective, that I've gone totally eclectic, I've completely lost my rudder, I'm simply stealing ideas from everybody in sight. Or else—and maybe a few people will entertain me this far—they may take me seriously and assume that an entirely different aesthetic is operating here, and, if so, they may ask themselves, 'What could it be?'"

"I mean, in undertaking a retrospective at all I had to accept the idea of a dialogue with the art world, in all its peculiarities. And it's a little bit like that book 'Flatland,' you know, where the author meticulously sets out this two-dimensional world, and then he introduces a visitor from the third dimension. The thing is, everything the visitor shows them can be explained away two-dimensionally. There's no way you can introduce the third dimension to the second that can't be rationalized away. The same thing applies to us here: the idea of the fourth dimension. Basically, when you look at the art world, as a whole it's a three-dimensional world—all its structures and practices are geared to three dimensions—and I'm basically trying to introduce a fourth dimension. I mean, I—we—There's a group of us exploring the same terrain. And when we do it there is no fourth-dimension forum, no fourth-dimension language that is commonly spoken. I may not even speak the language very well myself at this stage, but I'm doing projects that

have dimensions—ways of going—such that when I put them inside a building I'm trying to cram them back into a three-dimensional world, and they almost disappear. At best, if somebody's paying attention, he or she might get just a brief intimation, a momentary trace, like a streak in a cloud chamber. But that's it."

When Einstein and Heisenberg talk about the fourth dimension, I pointed out, they're talking about time.

"That's what I'm talking about, too," Irwin replied. "Exactly that. Time: *experience*. Einstein gives you all that stuff about time and trains coming toward



you and going away, but it's always in relation to you as the perceiver, the observer. Time is experience. Time is a non-thing; it has no physical properties—or it has infinite physical properties. I can point to its effects—the flower opens, the flower closes, the flower dies; or the way a clock metes out time; or the cadences, the rhythms of a voice—but I'm not pointing *at* time. Time is only understood in here." He thumped his chest. "Or there." He pointed at mine. "It's totally experiential. And it's the same way with quality: qualities reveal themselves to observers only across time."

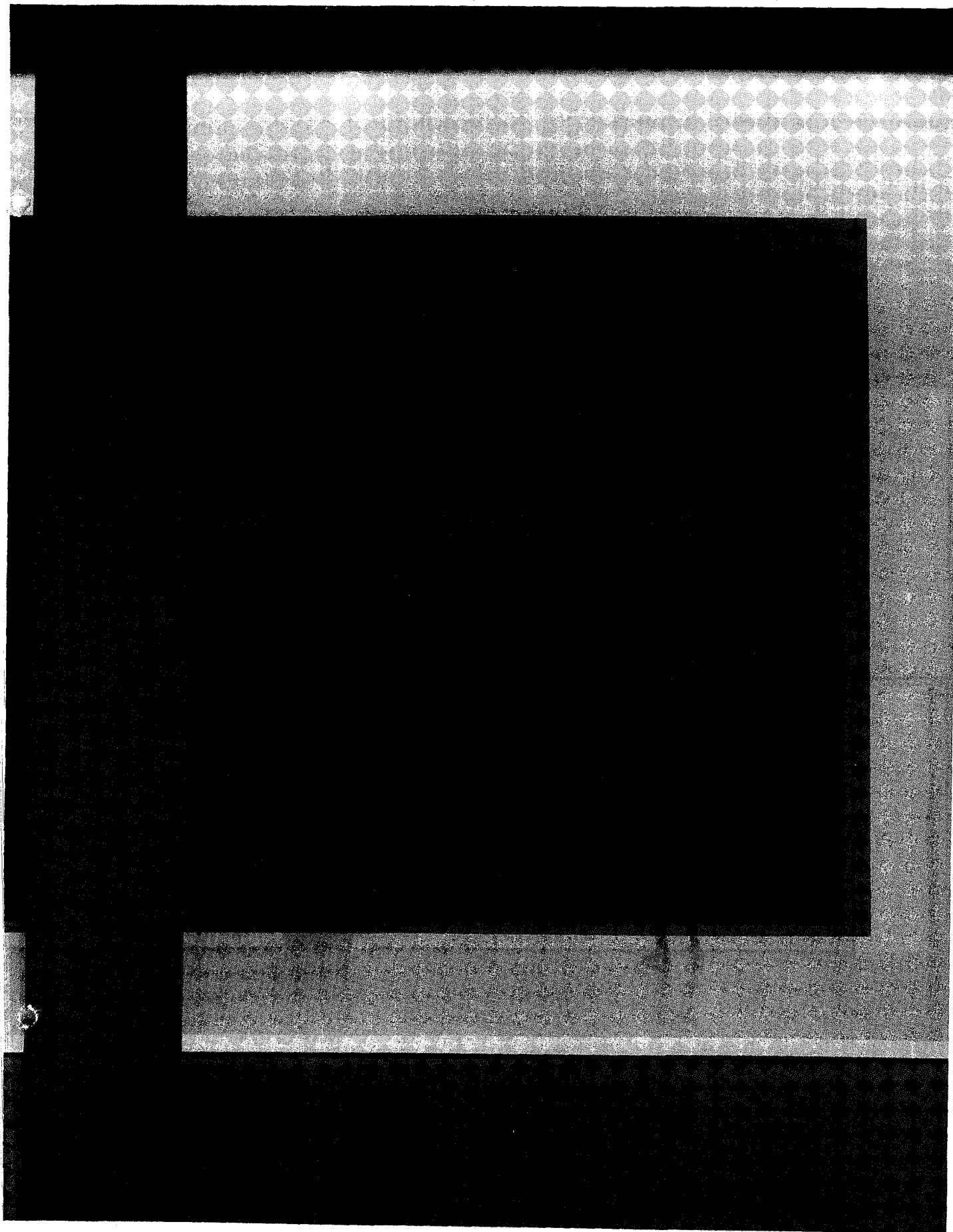
Paradoxically, it occurred to me, presence itself, immediacy—Irwin's Holy

Grail—reveals itself only across time, across the fourth dimension. You have to stop, shut up, and listen if you're ever going to hear.

Outside, the sun was setting, and evening was coming on.

If you spend any time with Irwin, you're likely to notice that he has two quintessential gestures. He'll be rolling along, expounding at length, and then, at a certain moment, he'll bring his hand up, thumb and fingers bunched together, like a tulip, which he then proceeds to open out, in a blossoming—his whole face opening, his eyebrows riding up his broad forehead, a bemused grin spreading across his face. It's an easy, breezy gesture of openness and release. You've got to keep your sense of humor, he may say; at a certain point, you've just got to let things go. The tulip opening. All I'm saying—*ppffff*, the tulip opening—is that the wonder is still there. Then, at other times, his entire being will seem to focus, to concentrate: his face will scrunch up, his eyes will narrow, he'll seem to throw all his body weight behind his arm as it screws an imaginary anchor into an invisible massif before him—a gesture gritty with determination. In fact, sometimes he'll even grunt—*mmmmff*. I mean, either you're going to do it or you're not going to do it, and if you're going to do it you've got to get in there and—*mmmmff*—do it. You've got to take all that and somehow, man—*mmmmff*—you've got to nail it. You really have to bite the bullet if you're going to do philosophy, halfway doesn't count for anything and there are no excuses. There are all sorts of excuses, and good ones, for not beating the shit out of yourself, but if you're going to pursue certain lines of thought, take on certain tasks, well—*mmmmff*—you've really got to make the commitment.

I talk about Irwin's contradictions, and, in a sense, this is one of the core ones. Because here's an artist who tries time and again to nail down beatitude. He wants to take all that bliss, all that serenity, all that wonder, and—damn it—he wants to batten it down. He wants to batten it down tight and then—*ppffff*, the tulip opening—to simply let it go. ♦



FICTION

THE MOAT

BY BRIAN BOYD

THE London Transport conductor leaned against the silver pole at the back of the bus, her hand resting on the coin belt at her waist. Her skin was dry and dark, and her eyes were bloodshot.

"Islington Road?" asked a young man standing beside her.

Wearily, she waved a long, thin hand toward the front of the bus. "Next one."

The young man got off the bus as it slowed down, and, carrying a large suitcase in each hand, he walked back along the road. He crossed the street where a group of workmen were pouring tar into a hole in the pavement. Standing atop the yellow tarring machine, the chief, in a navy coat with an orange sash across it, shouted directions. He took off his hat and scratched his neck as the young man walked by.

Most of the houses on the street were gutted. There was no glass in many of the windows, and the sun illuminated the cavernous emptiness of the buildings. Shards of red brick had spilled out through the black iron gates and lay across his path.

He walked along until he came to a house with the number twelve above the door. A stone lion with a chip taken out of its head stood inside the gate. He climbed the steps and, after setting his suitcases down, knocked on the door. He put his hands in his pockets, took them out again, then turned to look back at the men tarring.

The door opened a crack, and he saw what he took to be a woman's face, half hidden behind the door's edge. He saw one wide green eye, thick blond hair swept back behind one ear, and half a face, white in the sunlight.

"Mrs. Toor?"

"Who is it?"

"Cary Johnston."

She put a hand to her forehead to shield her eyes from the sun. "We expected a young lady," she said finally.

"I'm—I'm sorry," Cary stammered. "I thought they called you ahead of time."

She slowly pulled the door open and

stepped back. "Come in, come in," she said impatiently.

He stepped in and she closed the door behind him. "The American girl at the university said only 'Cary Johnston,'" said Mrs. Toor. "Naturally, I assumed . . . Cary—a young lady's name, surely."

"I'm sorry," he said again, shrugging his shoulders.

"Perhaps in America," she said with an air of generosity. Her gaze travelled to his shoes and back up to his eyes. "I'm very sorry, but I was planning, you see, to let the room to a young . . . Are there no young ladies from America at the university?"

"They've all found rooms already."

"I see. What a shame!"

"Well, I guess—I guess I'll be going." Cary nodded in the direction of the door.

Mrs. Toor stared at him intently, her green eyes narrowing. "Have a look at the room, won't you?" she asked imploringly.

"I thought you—"

"Well, yes, but I might be able to arrange it. You may leave your luggage there for the moment." She walked to the foot of the stairs and looked over her shoulder at him.

He followed her up to a small room at the top of the house. "This would be your room," she said, pulling the curtains away from the window. In one corner a white coverlet with small white tassels was stretched tightly over a narrow bed. In another corner, a tall polished dresser reached nearly to the ceiling. Beside it was a card table and an old wooden chair. On the table was a vase of long-stemmed lilies, pink and white.

"I hope you don't mind flowers," said Mrs. Toor.

"Not at all."

"We expected a young lady," she said again.

Cary went to the window and looked out. There was a sloping hill, a short stretch of pavement, and then the dark water of a canal. Farther down, he could

see a lock and several longboats moored below it.

"It's not much, I'm afraid," said Mrs. Toor.

"Sorry?" said Cary, turning around.

"The room. It's not much to look at."

"No, it's very nice."

"Do you like it?"

"Yes, I do."

"Hmm." She looked him up and down again, and then, as if she were kissing someone's proffered hand, she pressed the back of her own hand to her lips. The two lines between her eyebrows deepened. "You seem a sensitive sort of young man, so I shall speak frankly. I never imagined I would invite a complete stranger to come and live under my roof, but necessities—that is to say, it has become necessary . . ." She nervously slipped one hand beneath the white lace collar that was pinned tightly at her throat and began to knead her collarbone with her fingers. "My son lives at home. He's nineteen. How old are you, Mr. Johnston?"

"Twenty-one."

"Lovely. Yes. Well, as I say, he is nineteen, and he is fond of his solitude. That is to say, his solitude is very precious to him. He studies a great deal, and the house must be very quiet. I myself walk around on tiptoe when he is studying. He's very bad-tempered, I'm afraid. But very sensitive. That's why I thought a young lady, you see, a young student, a young female student. But you seem a very quiet, understanding young man. It wouldn't hurt him, do you think? To have someone his own age, a companion, to talk to?" She looked at Cary eagerly for some time before she realized she required an answer.

"Uh, no," he mumbled, blushing.

"Perhaps you're right," Mrs. Toor said, smiling. "Too much solitude isn't good for anyone. It's rather . . . lonely."

Cary smiled stiffly in return and pretended he had an itch on his upper lip that needed scratching.

"Well," she sighed. "I'll leave you to settle in then, Mr. Johnston. My son will

give you a hand with your luggage when he gets in."

A momentary panic seized Cary. He opened his mouth to say something, but his tongue was dry and useless. He followed her out onto the narrow landing and watched her disappear around the bend in the stairs.

He walked slowly down the stairs after her, clutching the bannister. He stood next to his suitcases in the entrance hall and looked around him. She was nowhere in sight. He could pick up his suitcases and just walk out. He imagined Mrs. Toor's elegant sigh when she realized he'd left, and her son's sallow, vexed face as he stomped his foot: "But you promised me a girl, Mummy. How else am I to marry?" Classes would start the next day, he warned himself. He couldn't afford to stay at a bed-and-breakfast for more than another night or two. He picked up a suitcase in each hand and began to climb the stairs.

Sharp taps came from down the hall, and Mrs. Toor's high-pitched call made him start. "Let my son help you with those!" she cried.

"No, that's O.K.," said Cary, going on up to his room. He put the suitcases on the bed, but did not open them. Instead he sat down on the edge of the bed and stared at the pink and white lilies in the tall, thin-necked vase on the card table. He saw that his hands were shaking. He was too young, he thought, to be on his own in a foreign city.

A door slammed somewhere beneath him, and the door to his room rattled as if in echo. He heard Mrs. Toor make a few unintelligible, excited remarks; then quick footsteps that set his door shaking again; then three loud knocks. "I'm sorry to disturb you, Mr. Johnston, but my son's just come home. I thought you'd like to meet him."

Cary opened the door, and he and Mrs. Toor waited together on the landing, listening to the irregular footsteps of Mrs. Toor's son as he climbed the stairs. As he turned the corner, Cary saw that one of the boy's legs was stiff as a board; he had to swing it in an arc off to the side to get it to the next step, and then hoist himself up by pushing down on the bannister with the opposite arm. His shoulders were broad and muscular; his good leg came down so heavily on the stairs that Cary could feel the vibrations in his own legs. He came steadily up the

stairs without looking up and without stopping to rest.

"Patrick dear, this is Mr. Cary Johnston from America," said Mrs. Toor.

Patrick was at least a head taller than Cary, and stood staring down at him, his shoulders heaving with short, violent breaths. His black hair was brushed not so much back as straight up; the sparse hair on his cheeks and chin and upper lip shone like smudges of coal dust against his pale skin. He grinned at Cary, showing a large gap in his front teeth, but the look in his green eyes was so menacing that when he stuck out his hand Cary jerked his own hand up as if to defend himself from a blow. Patrick's grin widened, and he continued to stare unflinchingly at Cary, who quickly clasped Patrick's outstretched hand in his, hoping to make it look as if that were what he had intended to do in the first place. "All the way from America, eh?" Patrick said, raising his eyebrows in mock wonderment. "That's a long way!"

"Yes," said Cary.

"I've never been to America. Have you, Mother?"

"Patrick dear, you know very well."

Mrs. Toor's hand shot up to her throat and she began quickly to trace the edge of her lace collar with her fingers. "He's only joking, Mr. Johnston. Patrick has a very wry sense of humor."

Patrick stepped into his room and snapped the door shut behind him.

"Yes, well . . ." Mrs. Toor said, staring at the closed door. Suddenly she turned back toward Cary. "I must try to ring the college," she said with a nervous laugh, "and tell them you've arrived safely." She touched him lightly on the arm and then hurried down the stairs, her head bowed and her hand trailing smoothly along the bannister.

After Cary had unpacked his suitcases, he sat down at the card table. He looked into the speckled red eyes of the lilies, whose dishevelled faces were turned toward him. He did not touch them; they were not meant for him. He tried to imagine what it would be like studying at the card table, in the evenings, in the stillness of this garret room. What would happen if he by accident broke the silence of Mrs. Toor's sombre, whispering house, by knocking over the vase or letting a book fall from the



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table? Would Mrs. Toor come running, frightened, her finger to her lips? Or would Patrick charge into the room and break his neck?

He decided to take a look at the canal, and, opening his door as quietly as possible, he tiptoed out onto the landing. But before he'd reached the top stair the door to Patrick's room was suddenly flung open. Patrick stood in the doorway, his dark eyebrows raised inquiringly. His bare feet were large and very pale. Cary smiled at him uneasily.

"Thought I heard a knock," said Patrick.

"Wasn't me," said Cary.

"Going out?"

"I... the canal."

"Lovely, isn't it?"

They watched each other.

"So how do you like England?"

"Oh, I like it a lot," said Cary, anxious not to offend him.

Patrick gave a gurgling laugh. "What a piss-hole America must be, then!"

Hanging on the wall beyond Patrick's shoulder was a dartboard, its red-and-black circles faded and pockmarked. "Is that a dartboard?" Cary asked, and then winced in anticipation of Patrick's derisive laughter.

But Patrick did not laugh. Instead he asked abruptly, "D'you play darts?"

"Darts?"

His leg extended to one side, Patrick began to move quickly around the room, gathering up green-feathered darts from the floor. "We'll have a little game," he said, brandishing the darts in one fist.

Cary stepped tentatively into Patrick's room, staying close to the door. There was a low, sloping roof and a small window, like a yellow medallion, on the far wall. But the similarities to his own room ended there. One wall was plastered from floor

to ceiling with photos of motorcycles and bikers—hunched men in black leather jackets leaping rows of garbage cans, women with bare breasts and painted nipples perched awkwardly on chrome handlebars. A pair of scarred boots stood, pigeon-toed, among blue-and-white, tea-stained porcelain cups. Pinned to the wall above his desk, beside a gray photo of a woman with huge breasts from page 3 of the *Daily Mirror*, was a picture of Sir Isaac Newton, a dart

hole piercing the curl of his wig just above his right ear.

Patrick handed Cary some darts, and their green tails tickled his palm. "First I'll have a go," Patrick said in a confidential manner. "Then you have a go. All right?" He kicked the door shut and, backing up against it, raised the gray point of a dart close to his eye. Cary felt his throat tighten; he hoped Mrs. Toor would have reason at that very moment to come looking for her son, providing Cary with an excuse to leave the game. But then he realized Mrs. Toor probably made a point of not disturbing Patrick when he was in his room; she would assume he was studying.

"Round the clock," said Patrick. "Doubles, then trebles. Five quid—we'll start small—to the winner. All right?"

Cary stared, round-eyed, at the black-and-red circles.

"Round the clock, round the board," repeated Patrick impatiently. "You've played?"

Cary cleared his throat. "You just go around, right? From one to—" He squinted at the board. "To twenty."

"Doubles, trebles, and the eye." He laid a thick finger on one of his lower eyelids.

"Doubles"—Cary had no idea what he meant by doubles, let alone trebles—"is twice the score that you—"

"The circle on the outside," said Patrick, speaking slowly and deliberately as if to a young child, "that's double. Treble's the inner circle. Bull's-eye in the center. Very simple, really," he added, raising his dart again.

"Ready?"

Cary nodded.

"Right." Patrick hissed through his teeth as the dart flew from his hand. It landed with a dull thud in the red stripe beneath the number 1.

Cary felt it was important for his safety that he do well. But he realized it was hopeless. He was terrible at games like this. He held his breath as he threw the first dart, and his hand shook a little. The dart bounced off the outer metal rim of the board and slid across the floor. He was aware that Patrick was watching him, carefully yet circumspectly, like a cop keeping his eye on a drunk. Cary's second dart struck the bull's-eye. "Rather too early," said Patrick.



With grave precision, Patrick progressed rapidly through the numbers on the board. "D'you know why my leg's like this?" he asked as he took careful aim.

"No," said Cary.

"Accident." Patrick hissed as each dart left his hand. "On me bike. They put metal pins in my knee. The bones were all in a thousand pieces. So was my bike. You know how long I was in hospital for?"

"No."

"A year. A whole fucking year. Have you ever been in hospital?"

"Once, just for a few days."

"A year's a hell of a long time, I can tell you."

"Sounds terrible."

"Oh, it's not so bad." Patrick flicked the tail of a dart with his thumb. "It saved my life, really, having the wreck. I used to drink all the fucking time and run around on me bike. It was only a matter of time till I got killed."

When Patrick had won the game, he sat back on his bed with a laugh, rubbing his ear, like a cat. "What do you think of my mother?" he said with a grin.

"She's a very nice lady," said Cary carefully.

"You're very polite for a bloody American," he said, and stopped smiling. "Do you think she's pretty?" His gray-green eyes watched Cary intently, and Cary felt again the angry intimacy in his look.

There was a loud banging from the street, and Cary, pretending an interest in it, moved over to the window and looked out.

"There's an American girl at the Lion's Cross," said Patrick.

"The Lion's Cross?"

"The pub. She's an American. Shall I introduce you?"

"Why?" Cary laughed. "Because I'm American?"

Patrick gazed past him at the streaked yellow window. "Buy me a round or two," he said, "and we'll forget the five quid." Without waiting for an answer, he pushed himself off the bed and dragged his stiff leg to the door.

Cary opened his mouth to explain that he'd rather stay behind, but by the time he had worked out how to say it they were at the bottom of the stairs. There, in the dark entrance hall, he felt suddenly foolish and cowardly. Why not

go with him? Cary silently followed him out into the street.

THEY crossed over the canal on a small footbridge and picked their way through giant mounds of rubble to a squat, windowless building at the end of the street. A lion with faded gold locks yawned miserably down on them from a cracked and splintered sign above the door.

They sat down at the bar and Patrick ordered them each a pint of lager. He pointed out the American girl, a thin, sullen-faced woman with protruding, pinkish, translucent ears, like a rabbit's.

"She's probably not that interested in Americans," said Cary. "If she'd wanted to meet Americans, she could have stayed in America."

"She's called Lisa, something like that," said Patrick.

The next time she passed in front of them, Patrick shouted out, "Hey, look here! I've brought a Yank to meet you."

Without stopping even to look at him, she walked to the other end of the bar.

"Tell her you're from America," Patrick urged in a low voice.

Cary avoided Patrick's eyes, but when she came close to them again to fill a glass Cary cleared his throat. "I hear you're from the States," he said quietly. "What part?"

She looked at him blankly, without a hint of surprise. "Ohio," she said in a tired voice.

"I'm from Boston."

She raised the handle on the tap, which made a short sucking sound, and walked away from them with the beer in her hand.

"I don't think she likes Americans," said Cary, with a forced laugh.

"We'll forget the slut." Patrick sipped his beer and wiped his lips with the back of his hand. With an arrogant, crowlike tilt of his head, he glanced at Cary. "Your mum and dad must have quite a lot of money to send you all the way across the wide ocean to go to university."

Cary shrugged his shoulders.

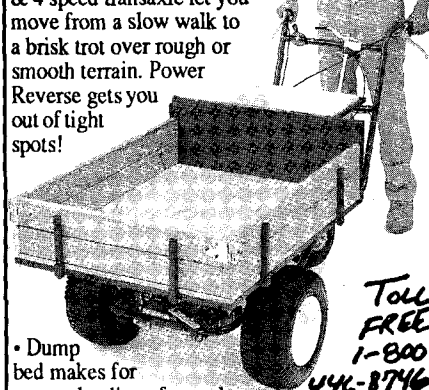
"You're stinking rich, aren't you? A millionaire, a real American millionaire."

With some effort, Cary prepared a smile he hoped would suggest that he took this as good-humored teasing, but his face felt tense and unmalleable, like a

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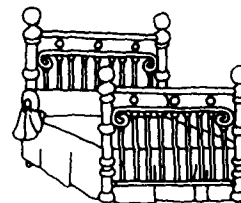
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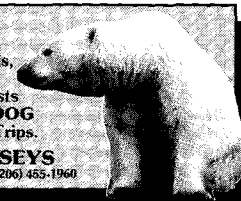
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wet plaster mask. He was afraid to let Patrick see the fear he had of him. He wished he hadn't come to the pub. He wished he hadn't let Mrs. Toor talk him into taking the room. He wondered if there was something wrong with him, the way he was always getting talked into things.

The American barmaid looked in his direction with no sign of recognition on her bland face. Cary felt a heaviness in the pit of his stomach.

"I'll be going to university, like you are," Patrick continued, his fingers drumming against his glass. "I never studied—not a bit—before I wrecked my bike. Now I work harder than anyone. There's no doubt in my mind, for example," he said, speaking slowly and deliberately, "that I work harder than you. I'm studying to be a scientist. I mean in a chemistry laboratory. I'm not so bad at chemistry, really." He took a long sip of his beer. "Do you know who my father is? He's famous, but I won't tell you his name. You know his name. A very famous and distinguished man. He's a Member of Parliament."

Cary did not know whether to believe him.

"Very rich, oh, he's got lots of it. He wouldn't be caught dead in a place like this." The barmaid was filling a glass nearby; he seemed to direct this last remark as much to her as to Cary. Cary thought he saw her pink ears twitch slightly, but the sullen, dull expression on her face didn't change.

"They're divorced, your parents?" Cary asked in a careful voice.

Patrick smiled at him. "They were never married. She worked for him, you see. Oh, he took very good care of her. He bought her this house, he sent us lots of presents. We had to live a little out of the way like, here where no one else lives except a few squatters. That way no one would see the famous man visiting his whore. But can't complain, can't complain. It's an awfully nice house, don't you think? The very best families used to live here, you know, before the war. Then no one wanted to rebuild, after the bombings. Sad, really. And now every day, or near about, another house gets burned out all over again because some squatter's built a bonfire in the middle of the drawing room to keep his buttocks warm. I met another American here, by the by. He

SOOT

Archaic, the trains mated with our human blood.
Stone trestle, abutment wall. Above the tracks
A rakish exile Santa lashed to a pole.
Black cinders, burdock, sumac, Pepsi, cellophane,
Each syllable a filament in the cord
Of a word-net knotted in the passionate shadows
Of skeletal vine and bean pole in one back yard
Along the embankment. Here with dirty thunder
Deliberate, heavy creatures before the light
Of morning made the bedroom windows tremble
With lordly music, and their exhalations
Tingled our nostrils. Railbed tavern and church
Of former slaves, synagogue of the low,
Sicilian grocery, Polish crèche. A seed
Of particles that Zeus-like penetrated
The bread and carboned the garden tomatoes—even
Our sheets that bucked and capered in the wind
Flashed whiter than others, tempered by iron black
Bleaching to armor in silver winter sun.

—ROBERT PINSKY

was a squatter. Nice bloke, very nice bloke. His girlfriend got bumped off, though, so you never see him nowadays. Suppose he went home."

He scratched at his smudge of a moustache with his thumb. "Oh, but my dad treated us fine. Very fine. We had a very, very nice sort of home life, with food and all that, and we went into the countryside for a week or two every summer holiday. Gave me gifts on my birthday, till I was ten. Then I was too old for gifts, my mum said. He's a great man, my dad. I'm not half the man my dad is. Not an eighth. Not a sixteenth."

Cary gazed warily at Patrick's mournful face. Was he telling the truth? His lips, startlingly red against his pale skin and charcoal beard, were supple with drink.

"Do you get to see him much?" Cary asked.

"Never. Never. No, he hasn't been to visit us in three or four years. Saw him once, year 'fore last, blowing his nose into a handkerchief on a corner in Kensington. Expect he had a cold. I stopped me bike a foot away from him. Didn't recognize me, with my helmet on and everything. I didn't say a word. Late for a delivery, like." Laughing out loud, he walloped Cary on the back. "You wouldn't be here if it weren't he'd for-

gotten us." Patrick's gray-green eyes, hazy as sea glass, peered at Cary over the edge of his beer mug. His lip was drawn back over the gap in his teeth. "We're letting rooms to scholars from America now, to pay for our bread. Yes, if it weren't for my dad, you wouldn't be here now. Just think of that, won't you? Just think of that!"

Cary felt obliged to order another round, and when they locked the doors of the pub in midafternoon he and Patrick were the last of the patrons to stumble, squinting, into the sunlight.

MRS. TOOR was standing in the dark entrance hall as they came in the front door. She smiled at them; it seemed to Cary that she must think her plan had come to fruition, that she must see them as companions and friends. "You're just in time for tea. I thought we'd take it on the lawn. It's such a fine day." She was squeezing the long, delicate fingers of one hand between the thumb and finger of the other, working her way first up one finger and then down the next, as if she were a surgeon searching for cracks in the bone.

"Oh, wonderful," said Patrick. "I'm so thirsty. Aren't you, Mr. Johnston?"

They followed Mrs. Toor out to the lawn behind the house, where she had

already set up a card table with a teapot, three cups, and a platter overflowing with cookies of various shapes dusted with a fine white powder.

She sat down in a wicker chair, spread a white napkin carefully over her lap, and began pouring the tea. Patrick threw himself into a chair on the opposite side of the little table, turning his seat around so that he was looking away from his mother and toward the narrow canal. Cary sat between them, perched awkwardly on the edge of his chair.

Two swans floated indifferently through long swirls of violet and green on the shiny, oily surface of the canal. A plastic jug bobbed gently against the concrete bank on the far side. From a tall brick building farther down came a man in baggy blue pants, who dumped a bucket of crumbs in the water. The swans swam quickly toward them and began darting their heads into the water, twisting their necks nervously.

"There you are," said Mrs. Toor, handing Cary a cup of tea. "Please, have a biscuit."

"You Americans don't call them biscuits, do you?" said Patrick, reaching across the table to grab one. "What is it you call them?"

"Cookies," said Cary.

"Yes, cooo-kies," Patrick said, drawing out the first syllable of the word. He bit into the cookie, snapping it in two.

"Oh, there is that cat again!" Mrs. Toor cried out, pointing across the canal to where a gray-black cat reclined luxuriously in a patch of sunlight, watching the two swans with sleepy curiosity. "That cat is always wandering about," she said to Cary, lowering her voice.

"Why are you whispering, Mother?" asked Patrick irritably. "Who are you afraid will hear?"

"He comes across the footbridge and tries to get in the house. Sniffs around the milk bottles, which I don't mind, of course, but then, you see, he chews the leaves on the plants. He's very nearly killed one of them already."

Patrick laughed aloud.

"Patrick knows who the cat's owner is. He says she lives in one of these houses along the Islington Road."

"She's a squatter," said Patrick. "Sold her bloke's bike right out from under his nose. All the fucking time high as a kite."

"I think he's underfed. I don't think a healthy cat would eat plants, do you?"

Cary shook his head.

"Patrick told her that if he found the cat here again he would throw it into the canal," Mrs. Toor said with a long, nervous laugh. She raised her napkin to her lips. "He was joking, of course, but really!"

"What makes you say I'm joking, Mother?" He tilted his head to one side and, closing one eye against the sun, gazed across the water at the cat.

"Oh, Patrick dear," said Mrs. Toor, blushing. She picked a cookie from the platter.

Cary listened uncomfortably to the sound of his own loud chewing.

"Do you remember the peacocks we had here at one time, Patrick? Two beautiful peacocks, Mr. Johnston, parading back and forth along the canal."

"You sold them to the electrician."

"Patrick, I . . ." Her mouth formed a few words soundlessly. Finally she turned to Cary. "Our purse is rather small, I'm afraid."

With infinite care, she brushed some crumbs from her blue dress. "Money isn't everything, I feel, don't you, Mr. Johnston? I know it's an aphorism, but that doesn't mean there isn't any truth in it."

One of the longboats near the lock had moved away from its moorings and turned slowly out into the middle of the canal. A canal worker climbed up on deck as the boat floated toward them. He rested his elbows on top of the long cabin. "Good afternoon," he said, nodding.

"Good afternoon," said Mrs. Toor severely.

Another man, a cap shading his eyes, sat hunched forward by the tiller. He nodded, and spit over the side.



A row of dirty, opaque windows, the word "Waterways" painted in blue beneath them, drifted past. The motor gurgled faintly and sowed white bubbles in its wake.

As he watched the longboat disappear under the footbridge, Cary suddenly caught sight of the gray-black cat, trotting toward them along the narrow black iron railing of the bridge. It stopped where the railing ended, its two front paws at the very edge, and, craning its neck, studied the ground below. Then it leaped gracefully onto the Toors' lawn.

Patrick pushed himself out of his chair with a grunt and stood, leaning heavily on his good leg.

"Patrick," said Mrs. Toor, almost in a whisper. "Patrick, sit down, dear."

The cat trotted to within a few feet of where Patrick was standing. Its eyes were on the swans, who were sailing peacefully close to the bank, twitching their white feathers. The cat flicked its ash-colored tail sinuously.

Patrick snapped his fingers. "Come, kitty, come, come." With a grimace, he leaned forward and held his open hand out toward the cat.

"Patrick!" said Mrs. Toor, her voice quivering. As she stood up, her white cloth napkin slipped from her lap to the ground.

Patrick lunged for the cat. Cary sprang toward them, and the cat scampered off into the shadow of the bridge. Cary felt Patrick's hair, surprisingly soft, against his cheek, and he smelled the grainy warmth of his body. He couldn't breathe. His jaw hurt terribly. Patrick's arm . . . He clutched at it with both hands and tried to pull it away from his neck.

Quietly they struggled, and there was a strange coöperation between their entangled bodies, as if they were trying together to lift some heavy object. Then the canal had an odd lean to it, and so did the sky, and Cary was alone. He felt a hard, cold slap of water against his head, like a wave engulfing him from behind.

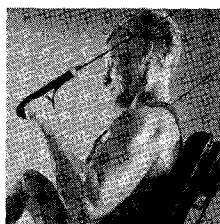
He came up spitting and coughing, his arms beating the dark, syrupy water. He breathed in the canal's stink: it was like tar and rotting fruit. His eyes stung. He told himself that he could swim; he wasn't drowning.

Mrs. Toor was kneeling at the edge of the canal, not ten feet from him, her

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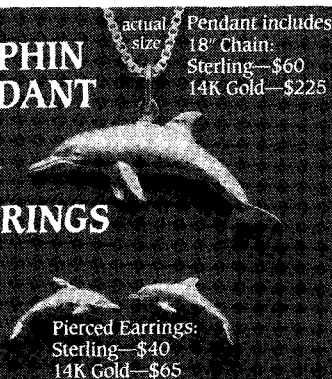
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hands clasped tightly in her lap. "Mr. Johnston!" she cried imploringly.

Something kept him from swimming toward her. Had he really dared to step in front of Patrick, between him and the cat? A rush of fear cut short his breath and made him cough again. Hadn't she asked him to? No. But without words, hadn't she said...

Patrick stood motionless on the bank. He looked at once frightened and proud, as if he'd succeeded and the cat were drowning in the canal.

"Mr. Johnston," Mrs. Toor wailed again.

Recoiling from them, Cary spun around in the water and struck out for the opposite bank. His shirtsleeves wrapped themselves tightly around his arms, and his legs felt as heavy as sandbags.

Finally, the concrete embankment smacked against his arm, and he pulled himself, dripping, out of the canal. Someone was running toward him; he lifted a finger and pointed at Cary, mocking him. Cary feared that he had lost his bearings while he was swimming, that somehow he'd been turned around and had arrived at the very place he was fleeing from, that Patrick was running toward him.

"Mr. Johnston!" Cary heard Mrs. Toor call his name. The sound came from behind him. He turned around, and there, unmistakably, on the other side of the canal, was Mrs. Toor—her sea-blue dress and bowed blond head. She was kneeling as if in prayer, and Patrick was bending over her like a drooping tree.

Cary dragged his sleeve across his face. A stranger in a sagging blue jacket, a tall man with a comical way of bending his knees as he ran, came hurrying down the steep grassy slope toward him.

"Hel-lo, hel-lo," the man called out in a singsong voice, waving one hand high in the air. "I didn't see you fall in, but I heard the shouts, I did." He stood before Cary with his hands on his hips, his bony elbows sticking out.

On this side of the canal was a new land, thought Cary, and he knew nothing of its customs. He waited shyly for a sign.

The man was out of breath and worked his cheeks like a bellows. Drawing himself up to his full height, he looked severely down on Cary. "Blow me down," he said. "You're a pretty picture!" ♦

THE CRITICS



DANCING

THE BALANCHINE SHOW

BY ARLENE CROCE

WHAT did Balanchine really expect would happen to his ballets when he died? In 1974, he answered the question this way: "People dance while I'm here, they dance a certain way. When I'm gone, they will continue dancing, but somebody will rehearse them different and it will all be a little different, with different approach, different intensity. So a few years go by and I won't be here. Will be my ballets, but will look different." At the time, that didn't seem such a bad thing to look forward to. The ballets had already changed; the technique was different in the seventies from what it had been in the fifties. For Balanchine to offer us as the worst that could happen "different approach, different intensity," for him to indicate that what was in store might just be a more radical version of the process of change that is built into the art, meant, I think, that he was seriously considering, probably for the first time, the matter of a successor. He was not harboring any unrealistic hopes. "Memories are short; also, bodies are lazy." He said that, too, in 1974, and in the same interview; he was very fond of saying it. It didn't quite fit into the picture he drew of a post-Balanchine world in which all that is missing is Balanchine himself, but the statement as a whole, while typically enigmatic (one wonders how different the ballets could look and still be his), was a far cry from the terrible finality of what he usually said about the future of his repertory: "When I go, it goes." The future sounded almost

tolerable, almost interesting. If this was a rare moment of optimism, what had caused it?

For Balanchine, 1974 was late in the day; he had turned seventy. The previous year, he had been in Germany filming fifteen of his ballets, not for com-



mercial but for archival purposes. The man who cared nothing for posterity was not above taking certain precautions. He went on filming or videotaping right to the end. Also, in 1974 his company was coming back to strength after a fallow period; his school was pouring out talent; his audience, which had begun to drift away and had been recaptured only by the superhuman effort of the Stravinsky Festival of 1972, was now caught up in something the

press called "the ballet boom"—it filled the State Theatre nightly, breathless with expectation. Balanchine rewarded it with the burst upon burst of glory that marked his final decade of creativity: "Chaconne," "Union Jack," "Vienna Waltzes," "Mozartiana." The choreographer's health was breaking down, but his creation, New York City Ballet, was sound.

Was it in the euphoria of the moment that Balanchine calculated the longevity of his ballets once he was gone, and gave an estimate of twenty years? Twenty years! The figure stuns us with its generosity. Yet when we consider that twenty years for a repertory without its master was a life span that could have been predicted for Petipa's ballets—and Petipa did not have his ballets on film—we begin to understand Balanchine's thinking. Probably, he was basing his estimate on the condition of those old ballets as he first encountered them, in the teens of this century. His own case, he must have reckoned, corresponded to Petipa's. *His* descendants, passing along their secrets, would be able to keep his ballets alive, in some sort of "different" but recognizable form, until at least the first decade of the next century.

We know now that, so far as New York City Ballet's caretaking capacities are concerned, this is not going to happen. The company is in the midst of an eight-week Balanchine retrospective marking the tenth anniversary of his death and the catastrophically swift decline of his repertory under Peter Martins. Five years ago, the ballets were still there. They haven't been put to the test of time and changing circumstance, changing tastes; they haven't deteriorated the way Balanchine had a right to expect them to—as a natural consequence of his not being there to rehearse them and despite the best efforts of



"Very good, Benson. That's what I want to see."

those in charge. That kind of deterioration would be heartbreaking, but it would be in the nature of things: ballets aren't like sculptures or paintings. (Even paintings die after thirty years, Marcel Duchamp said.) Those of us who have been around long enough to see Balanchine's ballets when they were new would give anything to see in them now the qualities that Balanchine predicted for them in 1974: "different approach, different intensity." But Martins' treatment of them cannot be said to embody anything so conscious as an approach. There is no new point of view, no sense of rediscovery or impress of conviction, not even a shift in tone. The ballets have had their hearts torn out. They hold the stage not through any lingering or newly arrived-at "intensity" but through their own irreducible merit and—might as well admit it—their cachet as Balanchine products. They live not as ballets that have changed but as empty demonstrations of formerly meaningful spectacles. Where the company used to put on "Apollo," it now puts on "The Apollo Show." It puts on "The Four Temperaments Show," "The La Valse Show," "The Jewels Show."

Balanchine was famously indifferent to the ultimate fate of his ballets; this is not to say he didn't care who would be rehearsing the company on the day of his death. History teaches the crucial importance of the immediate successor. Petipa had Nicholas Legat, Bournonville had Ludwig Gade, followed by Hans Beck. Without those men, nothing at all of the nineteenth century would have remained to atrophy. Balanchine trained

Peter Martins carefully, supervised his ballets, did what he could to educate his taste. He must have seen that Martins would not be his Legat, but he was a religious man on his deathbed, and such things were in the hands of God. As for Martins, he talked impressively about preserving the "legacy," but he also talked about not being just a curator (as if Balanchine's work had gone out of date when the old man died) and about the need for change and innovation (as if he were the creative force that could produce it). It's a question whether preservation was ever a priority with Martins. Because of Legat, Lopukhov, and other Maryinsky ballet masters (and because of Diaghilev, who loved "The Sleeping Beauty"), Balanchine was able to reclaim Petipa. Harald Lander by a similar route could reclaim Bournonville. But if the process of descent is disrupted right at the beginning, if the inheritance is squandered by the first generation, there can be no hope of eventually reconstituting it. The possibility that there would be at least one unborn generation that would come to know Balanchine's art pretty much as he intended it to be known—that possibility is denied.

Like the Columbus quincentennial, the Balanchine Celebration contains the seeds of its own destruction. Already vulnerable, Martins' regime is calling up reserves of ineptitude its worst enemies didn't know it had. Memory is not so short that images of the great performances of the past cannot be called to mind as a judgment upon the present. (Some of the greatest performances were being given as recently as 1991.) Inexpli-

cably, the company helps us out with film clips of the golden years or with "Serenade" or "Symphonie Concertante" danced by School of American Ballet students. These teen-agers had only to take the stage to put their elders to shame. But the elders convicted themselves, not only in the regular repertory, which they regularly misrepresent, but in special presentations, like the "Valse Fantaisie," the "Sylvia" Pas de Deux," and the two pas de trois to Minkus and Glinka, all of which Balanchine had made in the fifties for the likes of Eglevsky, Tallchief, Le Clercq, Adams, Hayden, and Wilde, and which the company was reviving for the first time. Some of these pieces had actually been rehearsed or supervised by members of the original casts. Since the "text" was true, the failure of the new casts was all the more visible. You didn't have to wait for the dancers to fall off point or out of their turns—the facial expressions were enough. Instead of the smiling mastery one might have remembered from Eglevsky and Tallchief, one saw tension and fear or the bravado of insecurity. Choreography that had been designed to show dancers off now showed them up.

There is a widespread belief in the profession that today's standards of technique are way above those of a generation ago. Before we discredit this belief, let's ask whether today's N.Y.C.B. truly represents the highest standards of technique. Standards did rise, and they also changed. But I daresay that at no time would the company under Balanchine have been incapable of the petit allegro required for the Glinka pas de trois or the dangerously unmoored pirouettes of the Tallchief coda variation in "Sylvia." By the seventies, the technique had branched out, but it branched from the same tree that Balanchine had been cultivating since the beginning. The company has now taken an axe to that tree.

Technique changes, but style, the soil that nourishes technique, never changes. Many of us were shocked by what the past decade gradually but unmistakably disclosed—that Peter Martins was not Balanchinean, not a believer, and didn't want to be. There are some talented répétiteurs on his staff, and here and there one sees a small triumph—a skeletal passage suddenly fleshed out with tantalizing detail, a soloist briefly endowed with wit and fantasy. If one could

seize and analyze these moments, one would see that they are made of simple virtues: constancy of articulation, musical fidelity, and, simplest and rarest of all, moral commitment. These are mutually dependent virtues, and they add up to what we have been accustomed to think of as Balanchine style.

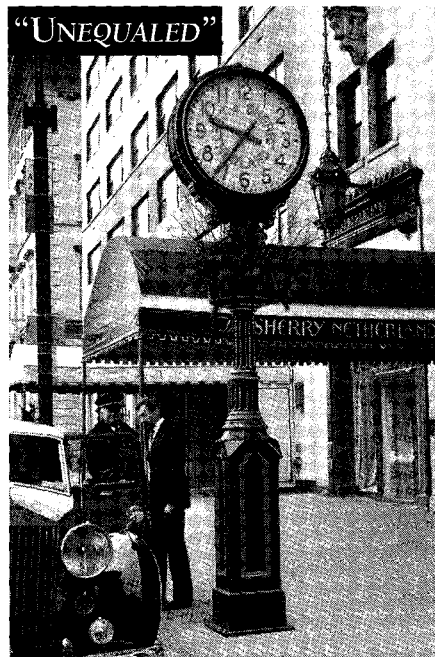
There is no great mystery to the style; children understand it. Among the many Balanchine seminars held during the season was one on the staging and teaching of Balanchine, at the Library for the Performing Arts. Kay Mazzo, a former principal dancer, now an S.A.B. instructor, had a young student demonstrate fundamentals and the principles behind them: the tightly crossed fifth position, the resilient plié ("go down to go up"), the tendus extended from the center of the body. Everything the student did revealed the Balanchinean ideal: a focussed, intelligent, forward-and-upward dancer overflowing with energy. Mazzo reminded the audience that in the well-known Cartier-Bresson photograph of Balanchine teaching class he is demonstrating tendu. Everyone knew what she was talking about; whether out of ignorance, fatuity, or self-reproach, the company has been using the photograph all season in its ads. I think that Balanchine, whose downward-extended palm is aligned with his right heel, is also telling his dancers to press the heel forward. Who is telling them that now? Balanchine's ballets were meant to project from deep inside the cubic space of a classic opera-house stage. That's why the tight fifth position is so important: it unlocks the body's ability to occupy and animate space in depth. Seeing the company now is like looking at a bas-relief or trying to read a half-open book.

And along with the sensation of deep space we lose the sensation of transfigured time. Balanchine's technique is the only known technique that prepares a dancer for the intricacies of Mozart or Stravinsky. The very first stroke of battement tendu (the foot goes out on *and*) is an intimate response to music. It is through strength of technique that the body stays in possession of music. Balanchine would make his dancers repeat tendu until they nearly went mad. When he had a stageful of women do it in "Symphony in C," when he had Ib

Andersen do it in "Mozartiana," he was alerting us all, dancers and audience, to what matters most. Lose the space-time continuum and you have lost Balanchine.

In the old days, when Balanchine was considered controversial, there used to be reasoned arguments against him, mostly from the Cecchetti camp, but also from an enclave within his own company, who preferred other teachers to him. In all the turbulence of that period, I never once heard any of those Balanchine dissenters challenge the basics of his teaching, and I see no rationale behind what the company is doing now. Lazy bodies have lazy minds. The criterion of performance is defined not by what should be done with this phrase to this music but by what So-and-So did with it last time. Martins is easily insulted by criticism, and he responds by accusing critics of wanting to turn the clock back to some previous set of standards which the company has outgrown. Isn't it Martins himself who is turning the clock back, to a pre-fifties world where full-blown Balanchine expression is as yet unknown? He resisted the idea of cooperating with former Balanchine principals who know the older ballets, because, he said, there are too many different versions of "Concerto Barocco" around. But *his* "Concerto Barocco" isn't even the "Concerto Barocco" in which he used to partner Gelsey Kirkland or Suzanne Farrell. A true festival version of "Concerto Barocco" would be one that united the best features of all the versions that are available, with Martins making the decisions. But this would have meant restudying the ballet and refreshing the N.Y.C.B. produc-

tion, thereby admitting that it had a few flaws. The Celebration could have been marvellously restorative; instead, the whole thing is being run at status-quo level. The revivals of Balanchine discards are all taken over from companies that had them first and did most of them better. Though the ballets are being presented chronologically, no opportunity was taken to revive the 1951 "Swan Lake," the 1957 "Square Dance," or the "Pas de Dix" (1955), which is not the same ballet as "Cortège Hongrois." We got a truncated "Gounod Symphony," a "La Sonnambula" with the wrong ending, and a "Theme and Variations"



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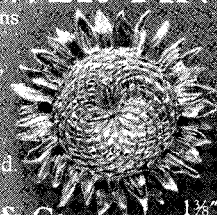
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without the overture that Balanchine drew from the last movement. We got no new décor to replace Benois's hideous "Theme," nor are there any plans to dress the dressable ballets that Balanchine was forced to produce on a budget of five dollars—"Stravinsky Violin Concerto" and "Symphony in Three Movements" and "Le Tombeau de Couperin." The new décors that were provided for some of the ballets during the first years of Martins' tenure were not all of them wonderful, but they showed a curatorial discrimination, which Martins was unable to extend to choreography, reviving (and then dropping) the third movement of "Western Symphony" and the Paul Taylor solo in "Episodes." Was a new production of "Bourrée Fantasque" (1949) needed to prove yet again that the first movement just doesn't work anymore? Created for two great comedians, Le Clercq and Robbins, on the intimate scale of the

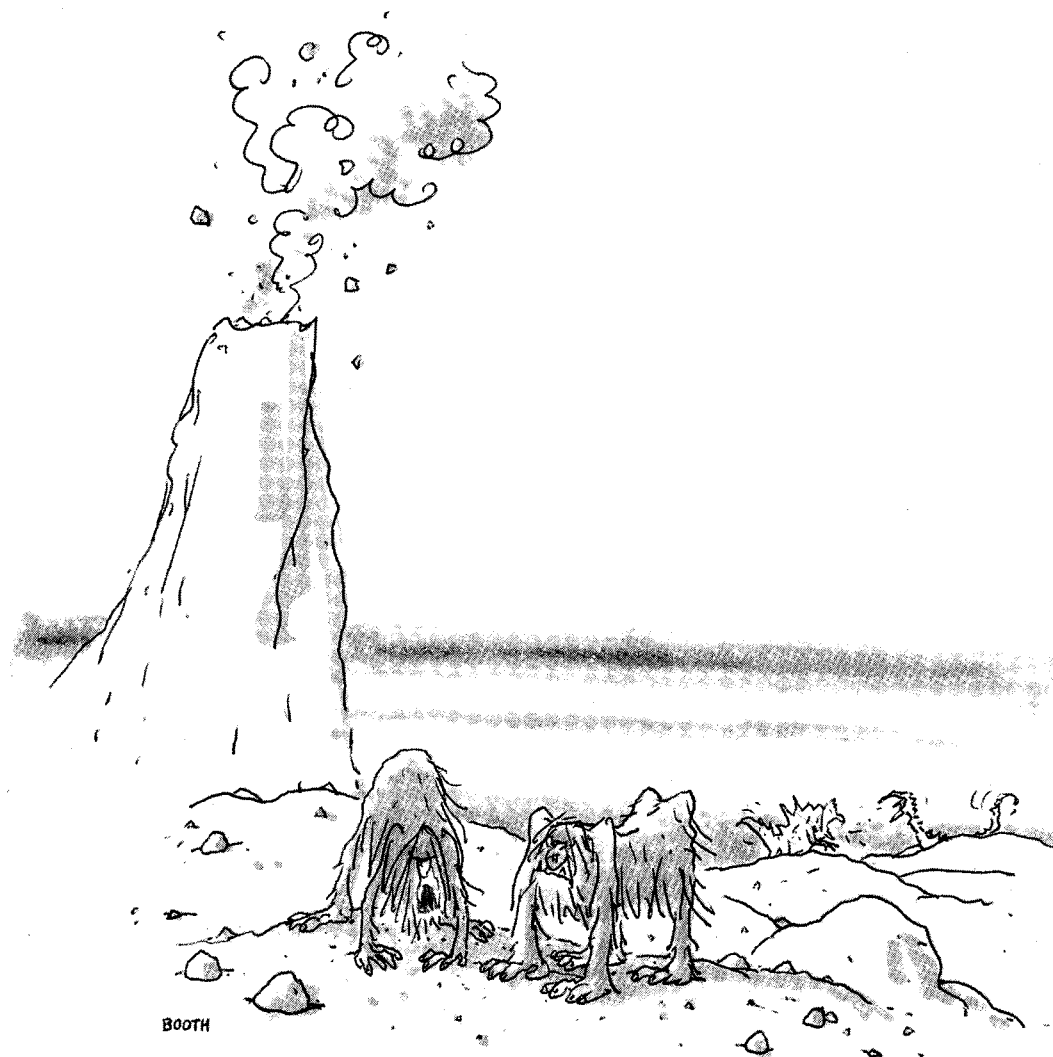
City Center stage, it cannot begin to explain why audiences of the time were left, in the words of one reviewer, "limp with laughter." I am sorry for whatever inhibition has kept Martins, or, better, Robbins, from replacing it, for the two other movements are worth saving. Legat and Beck would not have hesitated. And it is a ballet that poses no great threat to the company's current skills.

If Balanchine had any secret, it was one that has endured through two hundred years of classical ballet. It is that dancing correctly in three dimensions, in time to music, creates the fourth dimension of meaning. Ballet becomes metaphysical not by aspiring beyond its material parts but, paradoxically, by being humbly, gruelingly, systematically materialistic, working every technical fine point into the body until it becomes second nature. It may be the metaphysical plane in Balanchine's bal-

lets that is throwing his epigones into confusion. They don't see that there's a direct connection between transcendence and fifth position. They've translated simplicity into superficiality. Over and over, when I watch these reductions of Balanchine prepared by Martins and Company, the thought that occurs to me is: They think it's easy. Of course they do work hard. Martins is very proud of being able to give more rehearsal hours to the ballets than Balanchine could afford. He says the company is dancing better, as a result, than it did under Mr. B. Can he really believe that x number of rehearsal hours equals great performance?

From the look of "Swan Lake" and "Symphony in C" and "Gounod" and the other big-corps works, those hours of rehearsal go mainly into something Balanchine never cared about: straightening the lines, getting the dancers to keep together. People used to complain that Balanchine's dancers didn't move as one, like the Royal's or the Bolshoi's. Now N.Y.C.B. has a synchronized corps, one without rigor, without life. As for the principals, what do they offer us in place of living performance? Balanchine's "Don't think, dear, do" is useless to dancers who carry nothing in their heads but steps and counts. Do what? Phrase how? "Symphony in C," Balanchine's greatest showpiece, has become the mechanical ritual his detractors always said it was; it's hours of steps and counts executed in two dimensions. Nor does a ballet with a story make any difference. Here we may see dancers thinking, but their ideas about "Apollo" aren't interesting, and their "acting" in "Swan Lake" and "La Valse" is perfectly dreadful. The vacuity of "Orpheus," the retrospective's low point so far, stands as a grim beacon pointing the way to what a post-Martins generation will bring: performances that are complete nullities, dancers who can neither think nor do.

Martins' misunderstanding of the technique required to



"If we accept the unacceptable today, what's the outlook for tomorrow going to be?"

dance Balanchine was apparent long ago, in the way he cast the ballets, and he still seems unable to analyze the requirements of the roles and the abilities of the dancers well enough to bring the two together successfully more than half the time. This analysis starts in the classroom; by the time the dancer is in the rehearsal studio trying to learn a part, it's too late. And Martins' myopic casting had the inevitable dire result. The less accurate the performance, the less scrupulous the training needed to maintain it. A couple of years ago, it began to be obvious that something had gone terribly wrong in company class. Balanchine used to greet incoming S.A.B. graduates by saying, "Now you will learn to dance." But the school and the company have changed places; the school teaches Balanchine, and the company unteaches him.

Balanchine's system was ecological. Technique, style, discipline, morale are all under attack not because Martins has deliberately targeted these elements but because they are all interrelated parts of a single organism—New York City Ballet. To tamper with one element is to risk systemic injury. I have spoken only of the bad dancing, but the music in which the dancing is rooted is just as bad. Here we touch on something that is the inmost treasure of Balanchine, the basis of his art, and yet the most difficult loss to account for. Like Hermione in "The Winter's Tale," I feel it gone but know not how it went. Distorted tempos are part of the over-all dark picture of inefficiency which the company presents, yet even when the tempo is reasonable the sound of the orchestra cannot be borne. Just why this formerly polished instrument should be sending up clouds of pollution I cannot say, but it is humiliating to hear "Swan Lake" played better at American Ballet Theatre. Lest we forget his impact on the physical world, it was Balanchine, not Massine, who reconciled serious musicians to the use of symphonic scores for ballet and gave them steady jobs in his orchestra. But music is only one more problem that the Martins regime seems helpless to solve.

The Martins issue is splitting what remains of the ballet crowd in New York. His defenders are hailing the box-office success of the Balanchine Celebra-

tion and saying that audiences are enjoying themselves. But these people want it both ways: if the season succeeds, Martins gets the credit; if it doesn't, Balanchine gets the blame. Then, there are the horrified observers who would like to indict Martins for cultural vandalism. Some of them see him as a kind of prodigal son, reacting spitefully against the father figure of Balanchine. Still another group sees a troubled artist



they must protect for the sake of his contributions. These people are wrong: if Martins is an artist, it is only his own artistic interests, not those of New York City Ballet, that are at stake. But Martins is not a cultural vandal. The great mistake of the last ten years was in leaving him in sole charge of the company, in thinking that he, or anyone else, could do all the jobs that Balanchine did—teaching, making ballets, overseeing casting, coaching dancers, running the company's daily operations. It is not a crime to fail to fill Balanchine's shoes, although no one would think to blame Martins if he himself hadn't insisted so doggedly on doing just that *and* on being the company's champion fund-raiser besides. In the process, his own career as a choreographer has suffered. He is leaching Balanchine from the repertory and replacing it with nothing.

For five years after Balanchine's death, the company kept going on the impetus he had given it. In 1987-88, the first signs of collapse appeared; yet so strong was that impetus that the company held together even under the battering of an ill-conceived modern-dance jamboree (billed as the American Music Festival) in the spring of '88. Today, the ruin is all but complete. The ballets are still Balanchine's in the sense that they are as yet no one else's (though "Haieff Divertimento," a relic of 1947, was danced in a style more appropriate to a Martins ballet). Balanchinean dancers are disappearing and being replaced by un- or anti-Balanchinean ones. Too late, we remember the overhopeful climate of the late seventies and recognize in it the seeds of our delusion that the transition from Balanchine to Martins was a logical one. The inevitability of Martins, accepted by all, accepted (however ambivalently) by Balanchine himself, can no longer be seriously entertained. ♦



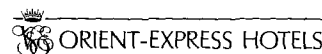
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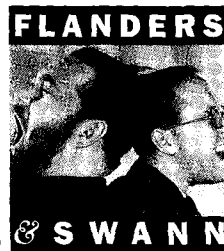
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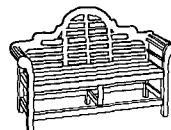
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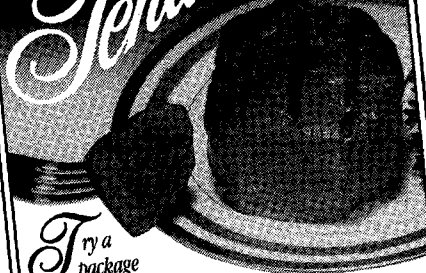
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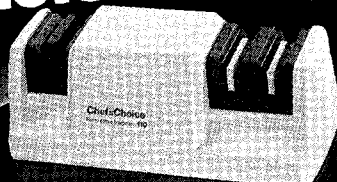
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WHEN I first heard about "Un Cœur en Hiver," my heart sank. It sounded like a do-it-yourself French movie: rainy Paris, Ravel on the soundtrack, mousy acquaintances having a narrow squeak with love. It even had Daniel Auteuil and Emmanuelle Béart, last seen together in "Manon of the Spring." Yet out of this weak and watery material Claude Sautet has fashioned something rich and strange. The wintry heart of the title belongs to Stéphane (Daniel Auteuil), and its frost spreads way beyond his rib cage—into the careful gestures, the buttoned-down shirts that match his feelings, the tiny black eyes like lumps of coal stuck on a snowman's face. Now and then, the eyes give the world a darting inspection, but that only confirms what a scary place it is: time for Stéphane to back down and resume his inward gaze. There was a hint of this in "Jean de Florette," where Auteuil played the nervous half-wit, but there the mannerisms had to slot into the movie's rather pat emotional scheme. Now he's on his own, and that natural hesitancy can be taken to the limit; we see the puffy, rodent features, and the tidy burrow he has made of his life, and we wait for the movie to coax him out.

Stéphane makes and mends violins for a living, which is perfect—so close to music and yet so far from its passionate risks. His latest client, Camille (Emmanuelle Béart), is a young violinist currently involved with Stéphane's business partner, Maxime (André Dussollier). She is, in every sense, a coming attraction: sex and success rolled into one—the kind of creature who would normally make Stéphane emigrate to Greenland in sheer terror. But, despite himself—or because of a shred of living self left somewhere inside—he starts to fall in love with her. They go from instant dislike to a mild thaw, then from deep-seated yearning to standup row, then from parting to sweet sorrow; in other words, they go



Making music: Emmanuelle Béart in "Un Cœur en Hiver."

through all the motions of love except the making of it.

"Well," I heard one viewer say as we left the theatre, "it was different." To be gripped by anticlimax is an unusual sensation for the seasoned moviegoer. O.K., you think, I know how this will pan out. These two may not be getting it together yet, but it's all part of the plan, just wait. Maybe a little longer. Come on, the joke's over, get on with it. But they never do. "Un Cœur en Hiver" goes from soup to nuts but misses out on the main course, and it offends our melodramatic instincts—the old, weather-beaten belief that a guy will get his gal. It is, in short, a Jamesian film—not in the finesse of its manners but in its willingness to contemplate failure as a respectable destiny, somehow essential to the man who suffers it. Stéphane is a descendant of John Marcher in "The Beast in the Jungle," the man "to whom nothing on earth was to have happened." And Camille's exasperated appeal as he decides what to do about her ("Don't 'decide'—live") echoes the climactic cry of "The Ambassadors": "Live all you can; it's a mistake not to."

Given all this, it seems unlikely that Bruce Willis will be buying up the rights to a remake. But that doesn't mean

there's anything prissy or wearisome about "Un Cœur en Hiver." Although Sautet keeps his cool, he's tough on anything that smacks of vagueness. There's barely a whiff of that smoky poetry of the streets, the distant trace of Jacques Prévert, which you find in even the best French films. When it does creep in—"Music is dreams," Stéphane says hoarsely—you groan and wait for the moment to pass, and it always does. Many scenes surprise you with their curtness, their refusal to linger over a mood in case it starts dripping melancholy. Even the closeups feel efficient—brief glances at Stéphane's trade as he glues a violin together and clamps it with wooden screws, or wedges a neck into place with a satisfying creak. You realize how long it's been since a movie actually taught you anything.

Nor does this economy stop when the music starts. "Un Cœur en Hiver" is an object lesson in how melodies can be worked into the fabric of a film. Sautet uses Ravel throughout but doesn't merely match the sound to what we see; on the contrary, he wants the two to exist in wary, difficult discord. Stéphane goes to watch Camille rehearsing the Sonata for Violin and Cello; she keeps getting it wrong until he leaves, as though his very presence were a third instrument, forcing her to miss a beat. Later on, she records another sonata, this time with piano; Stéphane stares at her through the studio window—as so often in the film, they are glassed off from each other, impeded by shifting reflections. This time, she makes no mistakes; by now, his presence is a comfort and a spur. But listen to the music—the skittering, faintly sarcastic sign-offs to the last two movements, which Ravel called "Blues" and "Perpetuum Mobile." Though Béart's playing was dubbed, she learned the fingering, and that is what you concentrate on in the fierce pizzicato; many strings are tugged at in this movie, but few of the heart variety.

Classical music gets well treated here, which makes a change; it's been more abused than any other kind, ever since "Brief Encounter" snivelled along to Rachmaninoff, and, with the demise of the great film score (where is our Max Steiner, let alone our Bernard Herrmann?), the abuse is getting worse. Composers are regularly hijacked to prettify a picture and give the audience a hot flush of high culture. Think of poor Samuel Barber,

press-ganged into "Platoon," or of this year's "Tous les Matins du Monde." Some people fell for that movie's nicely arranged gloom; I thought it was like being locked into a costume museum after closing time and beaten unconscious with a viola da gamba. "Un Cœur en Hiver" will have none of this, whatever the temptation. Camille and two friends play the plaintive Piano Trio, and Stéphane leaves in the middle, walking out into the street to catch a bus, and fading from our sight as the music fades from our hearing. He may be too moved to hear any more, or aghast at how little he is moved, or simply in a hurry to get back to work.

With his motives sliding around like this, it becomes hard to focus any sympathy on Stéphane, and the film is not in the business of helping you. That's what I liked most: it doesn't reach out and beg to be liked. "Un Cœur en Hiver" has been hailed as fine, delicate, and so on—all the usual terms that make cinema sound like tea or silk—but it's more cunning and diffident than that: almost Stéphane-like, indeed, in its chilly gaze. Whether it's believable is another matter. Despite the bar, the café, and the bookshop, I still couldn't recognize this unnerving *quartier* of Paris, almost entirely populated by emotional cripples. Stéphane veers away from Camille as if she were Jean Harlow, but I thought they were well suited; she wears long skirts, ties her hair back, and hardly ever raises her voice. Each is like the dull, brainy member of a Hollywood screwball couple, waiting for the brighter half to come along. When he takes his jacket off to shelter her as they run through the rain, dodging cars, you suddenly think, This is the most exciting thing they have ever done. They should stick together.

If the movie had stayed with their story throughout, it could easily have glazed over. Béart, especially, gives so little away. Even in "La Belle Noiseuse," which involved her stepping out of her clothes and standing there for nearly four hours, she seemed on her best behavior. Her beauty is most alarming in small doses, and Sautet rightly allows the plot to ripple away from her for a while. It made me wonder how interested in true love he really is—the movie sometimes feels happier with casual friendships and professional contracts. It's full of mentors: Stéphane likes to visit his old teacher, who has a tetchy, affec-

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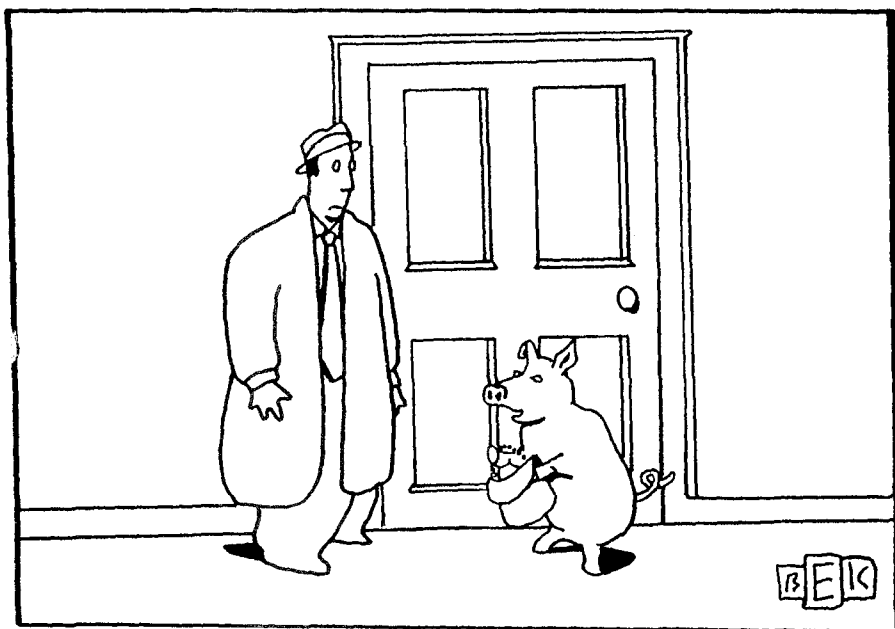
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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

tionate relationship with his housekeeper. As for Camille, she lives with her agent (surely a bad idea), an older woman who is clearly upset by her charge's need for Maxime and, later, for Stéphane. Nothing is made explicit, but the film is continually, lightly ruffled by homosexual envy. The two men, rivals for Camille, start and end the movie with a keener understanding of each other than anyone else can hope for. (When they change after a game of squash, they put on identical clothes without even noticing.) The central couple of "Un Cœur en Hiver" never fuse together, but other bonds are being tested and strengthened all the time. You won't believe me, but it's not a lonely film.

CONSIDERING that it's about building a wall, "The Music of Chance" is really quite interesting. If Andy Warhol had made it, the film would have lasted ten hours and been called simply "Wall"; under the direction of Philip Haas, it comes in at a compact ninety-eight minutes. Adapted from the novel by Paul Auster, it starts with a man called Jim Nashe (Mandy Patinkin) driving along a country road and picking up a hitchhiker covered in blood. This is Jack Pozzi (James Spader), a poker player who was set up, ripped off, and done in during his last game. Or so he claims: for all the apparent firmness of the narrative, you can never entirely trust anything that a character says in this movie. It slips out of your grasp as you try to nail down what's going on, what kind of work it is—a robust bad dream, a dour thriller with allegory up its sleeve, a road movie waiting for the breakdown truck.

Pozzi says he has a surefire plan to win the money back, and Nashe offers to put up the initial stake. This is what professional gamblers would call "an extremely stupid thing to do," but the movie gets off on riskiness by lending it an existential oomph denied to the rest of us, with our deflated lives. A like story. They drive to a lonely mansion with locked gates, in the middle of the country. Inside are two friends, Flower (Charles Durning) and Stone (Joel Grey), who got rich on the lottery. (Nashe, incidentally, has been living on a lucky inheritance, and you can't help noticing how many Auster characters come to enjoy their cool and creepy experiences on a private income.) Flower and Stone



"I'm warning you—it's a sty."

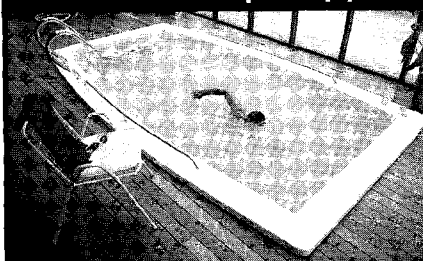
are a pretty obvious movie pairing—Laurel and Hardy in white linen. We're supposed to find them mildly threatening, and, just to drive things home, Stone has built a model city upstairs: "It's the way I'd like the world to look."

This sounds like our old friend the fascism of the imagination, and it's confirmed when Pozzi loses his poker game with the two weirdos. Unable to pay up, he and Nashe are set the task of building a wall on the grounds, under the guidance of Murks (M. Emmet Walsh), a combination of estate manager and camp commandant. They are like figures in Stone's model, victims of his fancy, and the movie explores what they find in that imprisonment: caged fury for Pozzi, a peculiar freedom for Nashe. All this remains faithful enough to Auster's original, though I can't help wishing the movie had fooled around more. The screen offers a good chance to clear out some of Auster's metaphysical clutter, all the high-minded explanations that get in the way of his plots and make critics feel they've stumbled into something grand. Auster cooks up an enticing tale—Nashe driving obsessively around the country—but spoils the dramatic setup by dunking it in abstractions: "The car became a sanctum of invulnerability," and "Slowly but surely, the adventure was turning into a paradox."

It's thus a relief to watch Haas's film

pushing ahead with the story, not ignoring these sombre suggestions but letting them flow quietly underneath, where they belong. This is his first feature film; much of his previous work has been with artists, including a documentary on Richard Long, best known for his landscape sculptures and paths. These are recalled by Haas's crisp, reverential shot of the wall itself, bisecting the frame, and in the final glance at the open road as the tale comes full circle. Auster himself makes a guest appearance here, which I found more saturnine and impressive than some of his dialogue. The rest of the cast is a mixed bunch: Walsh's seamy, pigeon-toed fatso looks routine by now, and Spader's Pozzi is a disaster—all his fair-faced, vulnerable skills traded in for a stab at vulgarity. Sadly, it takes more than a drooping mustache, a glaring shirt, and the ability to hold a cigarette between forefinger and thumb. But everything is saved by Patinkin; he tethers down what could have been a pretentious flight of fantasy and tautens it with dread. The moment when he walks in with a cake, to celebrate the end of their forced labor, and sings "Jerusalem" (of all things) is a hair-raising injection of surreal feeling. Like the director, he really believes in the movie's contrivance, and uses it to throw us off guard. The credits list "Mr. Patinkin's strength and conditioning consultant." The guy did a great job. ♦

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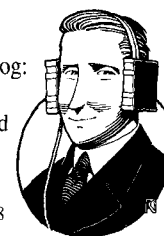


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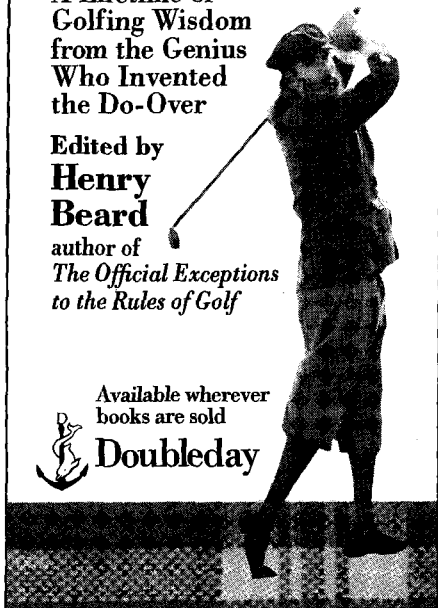
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BOOKS

DIRTY DEALS

BY DAVID RIEFF

FASHIONS in seventies clothes may have been making a comeback lately, but fashions in seventies drugs—among middle-class people, at least—have not. Cocaine, especially, has moved downmarket with a vengeance. Its use, concentrated now in an older, poorer, and more urban crowd, is more common as a way of warding off despair—as a form of anesthesia—than as, in the words of an early-eighties joke often heard in West Los Angeles, "God's way of telling you that you have too much money." For all the jokes about Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign, the Reagan and Bush years did see a sharp decline in middle-class drug use. Meanwhile, though, supply has risen dramatically and the wholesale price of cocaine is about half what it was a decade ago. Many federal officials now believe that their efforts at interdicting the flow of cocaine into the United States have failed, and for that reason, among others, the nominee to be federal drug czar, Lee P. Brown, and the new Attorney General, Janet Reno, declared recently that they are going to reexamine the entire federal effort.

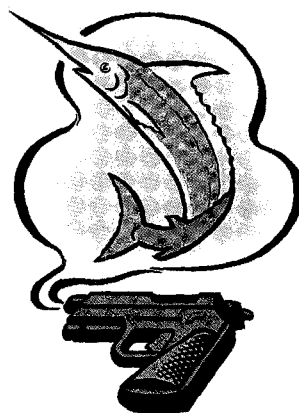
David McClintick's new book, "Swordfish" (Pantheon; \$25), is a microscopic look at one large early success of the Reagan-Bush drug war. As McClintick points out, by the late seventies federal officials trying to curb an astonishing rise in drug use in the United States had only the vaguest idea how the drug cartels worked. Although they had been fighting the traffickers since the sixties, and the lead agency in that fight, the Drug Enforcement Administration, had been created by Richard Nixon in 1973, there was, as a Justice Department official told McClintick, "a real sense of futility, even panic."

Nowhere was the situation more dramatically out of control than in Miami. Miami was a city that, in any case, had been radically transformed in the sixties. In the fifties, it was a fairly sleepy provincial Southern city of less than a million people—with an Anglo-Saxon old-boy network and Jim Crow laws to match—which for half the year could not be distinguished all that easily from, say, Mobile, Alabama, or a northern Florida city like Jacksonville. What made Miami different was the presence

of large numbers of Jews in Miami Beach, and its status as a tourist resort. In the winter, Miami swelled to something like twice its normal size with visitors from the North, whom the locals referred to as "snowbirds"—"snow" having a more innocent meaning at the time. Arthur Godfrey was broadcasting his radio show from Miami Beach—and living in a restricted hotel, for the great entertainer was also a great anti-Semite—and Jackie Gleason, who had moved to Miami from New York in the

sixties, trumpeted the city as "the sun-and-fun capital of the world."

Fidel Castro changed all that. From the moment he seized power in Havana, in 1959, Miami became the preferred destination of Cubans fleeing his regime. First came the supporters of Fulgencio Batista, and they were soon followed by Batista's liberal opponents—people who had backed Castro when he was a guerrilla in the Sierra Maestra, or, at least, had not opposed him—and then, in a mass migration that continues to this day, by people who had supported the revolution. In the eyes of its older Anglo- and Afro-American inhabitants, Miami became a Latin city overnight; and, even if the process was not



David McClintick's
"Swordfish" is a painstaking
re-creation of how D.E.A.
informant Robert Darias
infiltrated the inner circle of the
drug boss Carlos Jader Alvarez.

quite so fast as all that, by the early eighties there were almost three-quarters of a million Cubans in Greater Miami, and several hundred thousand immigrants from other parts of Latin America, particularly Nicaragua and Colombia. Native-born Americans perceived the city as having practically seceded from the United States: "Will the last American to leave South Florida please 'ring the flag?'" read a popular Miami bumper sticker. Latin visitors to the city marvelled at how much at home they felt, and they acted on their impressions with the purchase of condominiums and the opening of bank accounts. Miami, it was often said, was now "the capital of Latin America."

The significance of all this is debatable. The demographic transformation of south Florida from overwhelmingly Anglo and black to heavily Hispanic did take place, but the same transformation was taking place in California and in the American Southwest, and, to a lesser extent, in New York and Chicago as well. One difference was that the change was noisier in Miami, since the Hispanic immigrants were middle-class exiles, as opposed to the poorer, and hence less obtrusive, economic migrants who were flooding into Los Angeles during the same period. Another reason for Miami's uniqueness in people's minds was the association of the city's Hispanics with drugs and with exile politics. Miami was the springboard for anti-Castro activities, from the Bay of Pigs invasion forward; it was something of a rear echelon for the Nicaraguan Contras; and, from the early seventies through the mid-eighties, it was both the principal port of entry for the cocaine coming into the United States and the home of a banking system awash in the profits of the drug business. Other states were being used by traffickers—most notably New York and California—but in south Florida in the late seventies the drug trade had become as big a business as real estate or tourism, traditionally the mainstays of the economy.

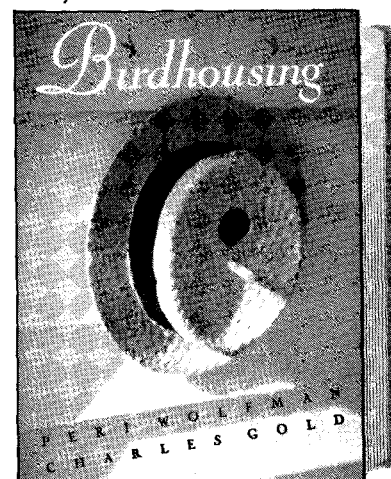
As McClintick shrewdly points out, the federal authorities, unsure of how to actually prosecute the war on drugs, realized that "the enemy had to be engaged somewhere." The public's attention was already focussed on Miami, especially as the body count in the wars between

dealers began to skyrocket, with reports of shootouts with automatic weapons, often in broad daylight and in public places like shopping malls, becoming a regular feature of the evening news. If the public was unable to resist the lure of such stories—a fascination that culminated in the TV series "Miami Vice"—the federal drug-enforcement agencies had their own reasons for targeting south Florida: it was a place where efforts at interdiction and efforts to penetrate the drug dealers' financial networks could be pursued together. And so they flocked to Miami, beginning in the late seventies, and began to mount heavily funded, carefully planned operations against the drug-smuggling rings.

At first, they concentrated on the apprehension of street dealers, then on the interdiction of drugs, both in Colombia, from which they were shipped, and in south Florida, where fifty per cent of all drugs smuggled into the United States were thought to arrive. But the authorities soon concluded that these efforts alone were not enough to make a serious difference in the flow. An Assistant Attorney General named Philip B. Heymann (now the Deputy Attorney General-designate) wrote a scathing report on what the federal agencies had done in 1979 and 1980, and, in effect, made the same recommendation that Woodward and Bernstein had got from Deep Throat: "Follow the money." He pointed out that "a full scale investigation into the financial aspects of narcotics trafficking in Florida has not yet taken place."

Operation Swordfish was the prototype of such investigations. It was the brainchild of a D.E.A. intelligence supervisor named Thomas Clifford, and grew out of a proposal he had written to his superiors in Washington after his own glum review of the D.E.A.'s lack of success in penetrating both the drug mafias (as the cartels were called in their native Colombia) and the financial groups that handled their money. The problem, Clifford declared, was a dearth of informants. He proposed starting a "proprietary"—a D.E.A.-owned business, staffed by agents and informants—that would set up as an investment-management company and would offer to handle the drug traffickers' assets. The company would do business only with people who the D.E.A. had reason

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to believe were in the drug business. Transactions would be surreptitiously recorded on tape, in the hope that cases could be made not just against the drug financiers but against the traffickers they worked for. Clifford suggested the name Operation Swordfish because, he said, it could come to symbolize "spearing the big ones."

From the outset, Clifford maintained that a front of the type he envisaged—in the end, the D.E.A. named its proprietary Dean International Investments Incorporated—depended for its success on recruiting the right informant. He would have to win the trust of the traffickers and become, in effect, part of their world. McClintick compares the role of the informant to that of a government spy—a lionizing view that, as his book eventually reveals, the federal agents themselves apparently did not share. But certainly they were looking for talent and access—no small task in a world like Latin Miami, in which everyone tends to know everyone else and it's hard, if not impossible, for unvouched-for strangers to be accepted into the honest mainstream, let alone the backwaters of drugs and money-laundering. The D.E.A. had got a break when a Colombian banker named Felipe Calderon, disgusted by his employers' policy of lending money to traffickers, began passing it information. Still, Clifford did not believe that

Calderon would be able to move easily in financial circles in Miami. He felt that, as McClintick puts it, "he needed another Latin with more flair as well as more local grounding to serve as the principal spy."

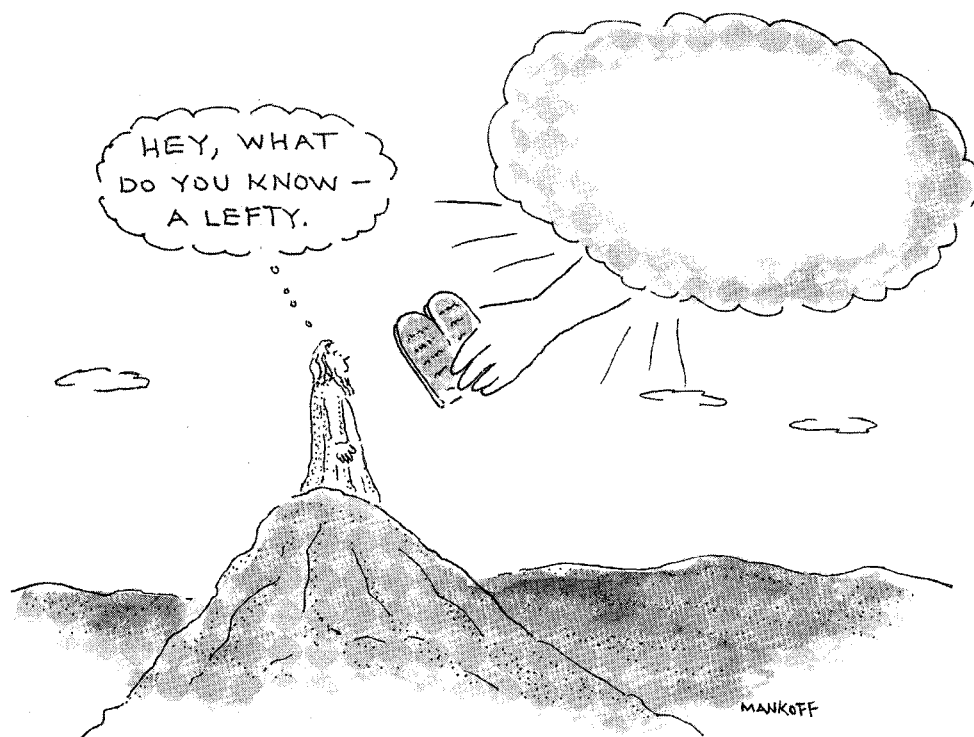
The Latin with flair turned out to be a Cuban exile named Robert Darias. Darias's family had fled to the United States immediately after the triumph of Fidel Castro. His father had been an official in the Batista government, and, though McClintick does not emphasize the point, this background meant that Darias belonged to the longest-established and most reactionary segment of Cuban Miami. He had fought as an officer in the C.I.A.-backed invasion force that landed at the Bay of Pigs in 1961; had been captured and threatened with death; and, like many of his comrades, had eventually been returned to Miami only because the United States government agreed to exchange some fifty million dollars' worth of farm equipment and medical supplies for the freeing of the survivors it had trained.

Back in south Florida, Darias had gone into business. As much as any aptitude he may have possessed, his family connections and, of course, the aura of his having actually served in the abortive invasion—no small asset in Miami in the sixties and seventies—had enabled him to prosper. In the late seventies,

though, his climb had ended: he was indicted on federal charges of tax evasion, for concealing profits on real-estate sales, and while he was in jail for that offense he was convicted on state charges of grand theft in some of the real-estate deals. McClintick takes a curiously indulgent attitude toward his protagonist's background, insisting that Darias's "intent had not been criminal." Darias, he explains, "had been undeniably negligent, and more than a bit cavalier, about American business practices and tax obligations, which were much stricter than those in Cuba. He had cut corners, and he was not proud of his conduct."

Released from prison but burdened with obligations to pay both his Florida liabilities and a federal debt of more than two hundred thousand dollars, Darias had been unable to reestablish himself in the business world. McClintick portrays him as a man whose "self-respect was nearly gone" when, in the winter of 1980, he drove into the Koger Executive Center, a development near the Miami International Airport, where the D.E.A. had set up a headquarters, to offer his services as a confidential informant. Money, as McClintick acknowledges, played a part in Darias's decision, but he takes at face value his protagonist's claim that he was (in Darias's own words) "concerned as a citizen that drugs are ravaging this community and this country." To McClintick (but never, it appears, to the D.E.A.) Darias attributed his decision in part to the fact that one of his daughters had nearly died of drug addiction.

But Darias had also sold and installed air-conditioners and short-wave radios in many houses owned by traffickers along the Colombian coast; he had been a guest on yachts the traffickers kept in Cartagena and Barranquilla; and even in Miami, before his fall from grace, he knew people in the drug business. This is not the curriculum vitae of a drug-hating, upstanding citizen whose only brushes with the law have been caused by "cultural" misunderstandings. McClintick's rendering of Darias's sense of himself as a man twice betrayed by the United States—once at the Bay of Pigs and once by the D.E.A. when, according



to McClintick, it reneged on its agreement to intercede with the I.R.S. and to take care of him financially in return for his coöperation—will be familiar to anyone who knows Cuban Miami. Such tropism toward blaming outside forces for one's predicament is a feature of life among the exiles, and particularly among those of Darias's vintage. Realists they are not.

Of course, the informant's life is by definition one of unreality. The longer Darias remained undercover, the more difficult it was for him to maintain the role he had assumed. That, as McClintick observes, is one of the spy's dilemmas. Another, for Darias, was that he had grown genuinely fond of Marlene Navarro, a Colombian woman who was a key figure in the trafficking ring that the operation was directed against. Reading McClintick's portrayal of Navarro, one can easily see why. Unlike most of the figures in the Miami drug world, who up close tend, like so many criminals, to be as boring as they are dangerous, Navarro—multilingual, cosmopolitan, and a beauty—seems to have been a figure straight out of an episode of "Miami Vice." Not surprisingly, the liveliest moments in "Swordfish" concern Navarro; dramatically, at least, she steals the book.

But it is Darias who is cast as the hero. After all, McClintick owes the entire project to him. It was Darias, furious at the way he had been treated by the government after the important traffickers snared in Operation Swordfish were jailed—in large part thanks to his testimony—who approached McClintick and proposed the story. "Swordfish" is, to a considerable extent, a collaboration between the two men. Not only did Darias make available to McClintick thousands of pages of transcripts of taped conversations he had had with his D.E.A. handlers and with the drug dealers he was targeting, and many personal notes, photographs, and other documents, but the two, in an apartment McClintick had rented in Miami, spent hundreds of hours conducting long question-and-answer sessions about these materials and about other aspects of the story.

For a reporter of McClintick's stature—he was a much admired investigative reporter at the *Wall Street Journal*, and his earlier book, "Indecent Expo-

sure," has been cited as a model for books by other *Journal* reporters, like Bryan Burrough and John Helyar's "Barbarians at the Gate" and James Stewart's "Den of Thieves"—the project must have been all but irresistible. But it is hard not to feel that there were more pitfalls amid this journalistic plenty than McClintick realized. The inevitable flowering of the relationship between author and subject—an intimacy made all the more intense by the fact that, although McClintick and Darias knew that the book was to be about Operation Swordfish and Darias's treatment at the hands of the D.E.A., the D.E.A. agents whom McClintick fraternized with year after year knew nothing of his relationship with Darias—may have compromised McClintick's ability to step back from his story in ways that could allow him to assess it dispassionately. That McClintick actually paid Darias for his time, and assigned him a small portion of "Swordfish's" royalties, is, while defensible legally and journalistically, emblematic of the conceptual difficulties of his book.

Not that the story is without interest. There is real drama in McClintick's painstaking re-creation of the way, step by step, Darias infiltrated the inner circle of the drug boss Carlos Jader Alvarez. The informant began with the bankers, offering Dean International's utterly factitious expertise in exchanging large bills for small ones and in wiring money out of the United States and, once it had been safely laundered, bringing it back into Miami and reinvesting it in real estate and securities. Then, having gained the confidence of bankers like Manuel Sanchez, an officer of the Bank of Miami, Darias was able to move on to the traffickers themselves. His campaign to insinuate himself into Marlene Navarro's confidence—so effective that by the time the D.E.A. had arrested the Jader Alvarez group Darias had become one of Navarro's closest confidants—was accomplished with the skill of a Don Juan or a great military tactician.

Unfortunately, as McClintick shows, the skill with which Operation Swordfish was carried out was not matched either in the arrests of the gang or in the ensuing prosecutions. The federal authorities—in particular, William French



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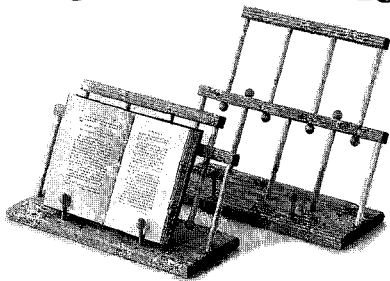
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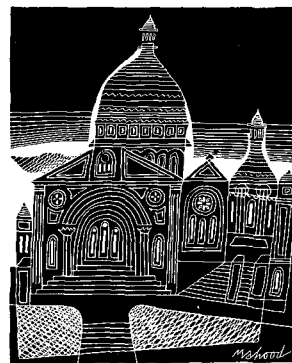
Smith, then the Attorney General—in their eagerness to come up with evidence of success in the drug war announced the rolling up of Jader's ring before the D.E.A. had made even one arrest. Other bureaucratic snafus, and also, McClintick suggests, conflicts between prosecutors and D.E.A. agents, all but guaranteed that, although convictions were obtained and long prison sentences handed down, some cases, notably Marlene Navarro's, may yet have to be retried.

It is not clear what lessons McClintick derives from all this. To be told in 1993 that federal efforts against drug barons are constantly being undermined by bureaucratic squabbling, turf wars, and ineptness, that drug dealers like Navarro and Jader actually do lead lives straight out of a B movie, and that after the dust settles most informants get the short end of the stick from their employers is surely to hear old news. The strongest justification for "Swordfish" is simply that it tells a good story. But though McClintick emphasizes the attraction of the story as his motive for spending ten years writing and researching the book, he puts forward other, more general incentives, as well. "Swordfish" "was an opportunity to tell the story of a group of intriguing people living through a crisis," he writes. "It was an opportunity to study, from the inside, an agency of the United States Government under siege from a great international menace. It was an opportunity to write about one of the most intractable social and moral issues of the late twentieth century—the drug plague." In taking advantage of the first of the three opportunities he cites, McClintick has succeeded magnificently. He has been less successful in coming to grips with the other two.

McClintick gives the subject of the United States government's now decades-long war on drugs oddly cursory treatment. "Swordfish" ends with a few pages of remarks on drug-control policy, but here McClintick's views are surprisingly conventional. Even though his account of Operation Swordfish appears almost consciously fashioned to

create doubts about whether such operations are worth the risk, McClintick curtly endorses them. Having established that Swordfish set the form for future campaigns, and having revealed, in minute detail, just how inadequate that form is, this is more than a little unsatisfying.

McClintick admits that the smuggling of drugs into the United States from Latin America has increased since the late seventies. But he asserts that operations like Swordfish are still necessary, because "they affirm and protect our values as a civilized people." Leaving aside the fact that civilization is rather thin on the ground in the world McClintick describes, what is most curious is his sedulous refusal to judge the D.E.A. on its own terms—results—or



to acknowledge that, since federal law-enforcement agencies have limited resources, the question of which programs to maintain and which to cut is a pressing one. All the efforts at interdiction in the nineteen-eighties—operations that might be called the children of Swordfish—succeeded in raising the seizure rate

from an estimated five per cent of the cocaine coming in to fifteen per cent. But (as a Dade County grand jury report noted in 1983) seventy-five per cent of the drug would have had to be confiscated to make a meaningful reduction in cocaine use. In any case, Miami is no longer the principal entry point for cocaine, nor is it now the benchmark either for the Latinization of the United States or for inner-city violence. On both counts, fairly or unfairly, post-riot Los Angeles seems to have taken over first place.

There is no question that McClintick's book represents an extraordinary job of research, but the finished work does not display his talents as a writer half so well as its preparation used his talents as a journalist. Like so many contemporary efforts to understand and explain what has befallen us, the book's insights are personality-driven, centered on the fate of Robert Darias; and therefore—despite their author's diligence, talent, and best intentions—they obscure at least as much as they illuminate. ♦

FICTION

Paradise of the Blind

by Duong Thu Huong, translated from
the Vietnamese by Phan Huy Duong
and Nina McPherson
(Morrow; \$20)

IN her first novel to be translated into English, Duong Thu Huong, a Communist turned dissident, fashions a vivid portrait that details unfamiliar vistas of Vietnamese life as finely as it evokes the dilemmas of adolescence. Hang, a woman now in her twenties, grew up alone with her mother in the slums of Hanoi, her father having been denounced as a class traitor by his brother-in-law. Hang's mother, aunt, and uncle, still bristling with the hatreds and sorrows of that history, make competing claims on her, vying, with extravagant gifts, manipulative ideology, and guilt, to define her future. Hang finds no easy escape from their choices for her—selfless daughter, illegal courier, or academic star—and her despair is played out in the recollections of landscape and atmosphere that become the novel's emotional register: memories of neighborhoods where "the aroma of onions, crispy dumplings, and red chilies fried in oil filled the air . . . overpowering the stench of the garbage"; of villages where "young women bend like slaves at their husbands' feet"; and of murky ponds where purple duckweed flowers "glittered, radiant in the middle of the filth."

Are You Mine?

by Abby Frucht
(Grove; \$19.95)

ABBY FRUCHT is a sensual writer, who cares as much about the bodies of her characters as she does about their hearts and minds, and in this tale of married life she offers a catalogue of reproductive joys and ills: a few years with Cara and Douglas run the gamut from pregnancy and birth to abortion, vasectomy, and legal ligation. There's something maddening about the way the author visits all these procedures and their consequences on this couple—it seems willfully experimental—and her fickle heroine is more maddening still. Cara, who has two healthy kids, a devoted husband, and a comfortable life, spends the whole book in contemplation of her own emotional needs—she even belongs to a women's discussion group that seems al-



BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

most a parody of self-indulgent female bonding—and nearly throws away her good marriage. It's unclear whether the author wants to roast Cara or coddle her, and that's how the novel really lets the reader down. Frucht can write—her approach to dialogue between lovers and to the vagaries of sexual desire is playful and fresh—but it's difficult to endure these domestic travails without a clue to how we're meant to feel about them.

GENERAL

Tragic Muse

by Rachel M. Brownstein
(Knopf; \$30)

RACHEL FÉLIX (1821-58) was so renowned as a stage actress that she could do without her last name. And she never took another: for all her many lovers, including the future Napoleon III, she remained extraordinarily faithful to her family and her Jewish past. It was also by sustaining oppositions that she rescued the ossified national theatre of France and became an international star. Rachel won her audience because she was both wild and regular, natural and artful, republican and imperial, subversive and legitimate. In aesthetic terms, her achievement was to link Romanticism and classicism: she was said to have put Shakespeare in Racine. At every point, this book is her match, classically composed and informing its lines with the romance of history. Brownstein describes it as a "postmodern biography," and she shows Rachel to be elusive even now. Rachel's suffering and longing are for us, as entranced spectators, to supply, from a stock of human nature that we are suddenly happy to acknowledge as our own.

The Outlaw Bank

by Jonathan Beaty and S. C. Gwynne
(Random House; \$25)

THOUGH everything in this book about the International Bank of Credit and

Commerce is true, it reads like a thriller—Eric Ambler stuff, with frightened shady informants and international chases, death threats and some real murders. The authors, who write for *Time*, began reporting the story of B.C.C.I. even before the scandal emerged, and by the time they had finished they discovered that the federal government had been smothering investigations of it for more than a decade. Beaty and Gwynne describe how the bank, founded by an ambitious Pakistani, turned into a global enterprise for crime: laundering "black," or underground, money, smuggling drugs and arms, and supplying American military technology to countries that weren't supposed to have it—even helping to procure nuclear weapons for Pakistan. Our government used the bank for illegalities of its own (Iran-Contra, for one), which explains the coverup.

Delmore Schwartz and James**Laughlin: Selected Letters**

edited by Robert Phillips
(Norton; \$29.95)

THIS correspondence stretches over nearly three decades, from 1937—when the twenty-four-year-old Schwartz submitted an unsolicited manuscript to Laughlin, at New Directions—to Schwartz's sorely troubled final years. Soon after his first submission, he sent Laughlin a collection of writings entitled "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities," a book that made him famous at twenty-five. Schwartz was an American *poète maudit*: his career as a short-story writer, critic, and poet was a matter of ups and downs; his personal life was dogged by lack of money (and the harassments thereof), emotional instability, intemperance, and, finally, severe paranoia. He was, however, a consistently brilliant letter writer—witty and wisecracking, intellectually stimulating, and contentious. Laughlin, too, was no slouch at expressing himself and his ideas on paper. Both men make sharp and shrewd observations on the literary scene of the late Depression and Second World War years, and they stray, to advantage, to music, sex, and baseball. The editor has conscientiously furnished notes clarifying obscure references and identifying persons mentioned—so conscientiously, indeed, that he tells us who Robert E. Lee and Adolf Hitler were. ♦



SHOUTS AND MURMURS

LEGACY

BY PAUL BRODEUR

THIRTY-ONE years ago, Rachel Carson's prophetic and seminal work "Silent Spring" appeared in the pages of this magazine. In warning about the health hazards involved in the widespread use of insecticides and pesticides, Carson wrote that residues of these chemicals "have been found in soil to which they were applied a dozen years before," and that they "are now stored in the bodies of the vast majority of human beings, regardless of their age." She went on to say that they "occur in mother's milk, and probably in the tissues of the unborn child." Most people remember Rachel Carson for pointing out the dangers of the insecticide DDT, which was banned by the fledgling Environmental Protection Agency in 1972, after it was shown to cause cancer in test animals. But in "Silent Spring" Carson, who died of cancer in 1964, also warned about the disease hazard posed by other highly toxic chlorinated-hydrocarbon compounds—among them aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, and heptachlor—whose chemical structure was similar to that of DDT. Aldrin and dieldrin were banned in 1974, after they were shown to cause cancer in test animals, and chlordane, which was sprinkled liberally around the foundations of tens of thousands of dwellings to control termites and fire ants, and was suspected of causing leukemia, was not completely suspended from use until 1988, long after it had been shown to be a neurotoxin, causing memory loss, fatigue, headache, and dizziness.

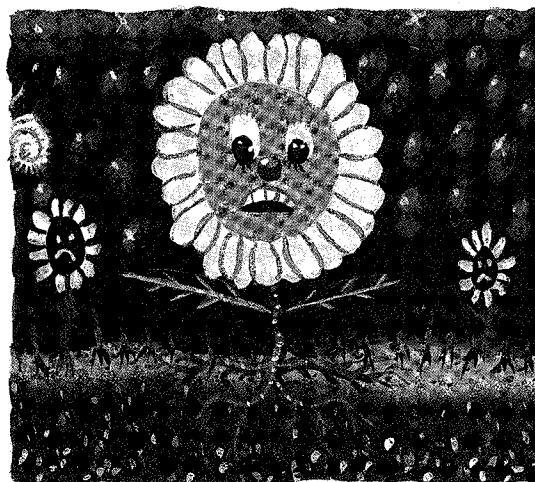
The story of heptachlor provides a cautionary tale. Carson warned in "Silent Spring" that it had been responsible for killing tens of thousands of quail and wild turkeys. No one paid much attention at the time, and twenty years later pineapple growers in Hawaii were using

huge amounts of the stuff to kill ants in pineapple plants. Once the growers had harvested their pineapples, they sold the pineapple plants to dairy farmers for cattle fodder. Dairy cows ate the pineapple plants, and heptachlor found its way into the milk they produced. When Hawaiian children drank this milk and ate ice cream, butter, and other dairy products made from it, heptachlor residues built up in them, as Carson had predicted they would. Indeed, by the early nineteen-eighties trace amounts of heptachlor, which is known to be carcinogenic in test animals, and to adversely affect the liver, could be found in the tissues of virtually every child in the Hawaiian Islands. A study is now under way to determine the long-term effect on the population of Hawaii.

In the final pages of "Silent Spring" Carson wrote that this is "an era dominated by industry, in which the right to make money, at whatever cost to others, is seldom challenged," and she added, "We shall have no relief from this poisoning of the environment until our officials have the courage and integrity to declare that the public welfare is more important than dollars, and to enforce this point of view in the face of all pressures and all protests, even from the public itself." The chemical industry and other industries launched a bitter attack upon her for writing those words. In fact,

some companies threatened to withdraw their advertising from this magazine because it had published her work. Harsh criticism came from other quarters as well. When "Silent Spring" was published as a book, in 1962, *Time* said that Carson, in warning her readers about the health hazards posed by exposure to DDT and other pesticides, was guilty of "frightening and arousing" them. One leading scientist (male, as it happened) questioned her right to worry about future generations, pointing out that she was a spinster who had no

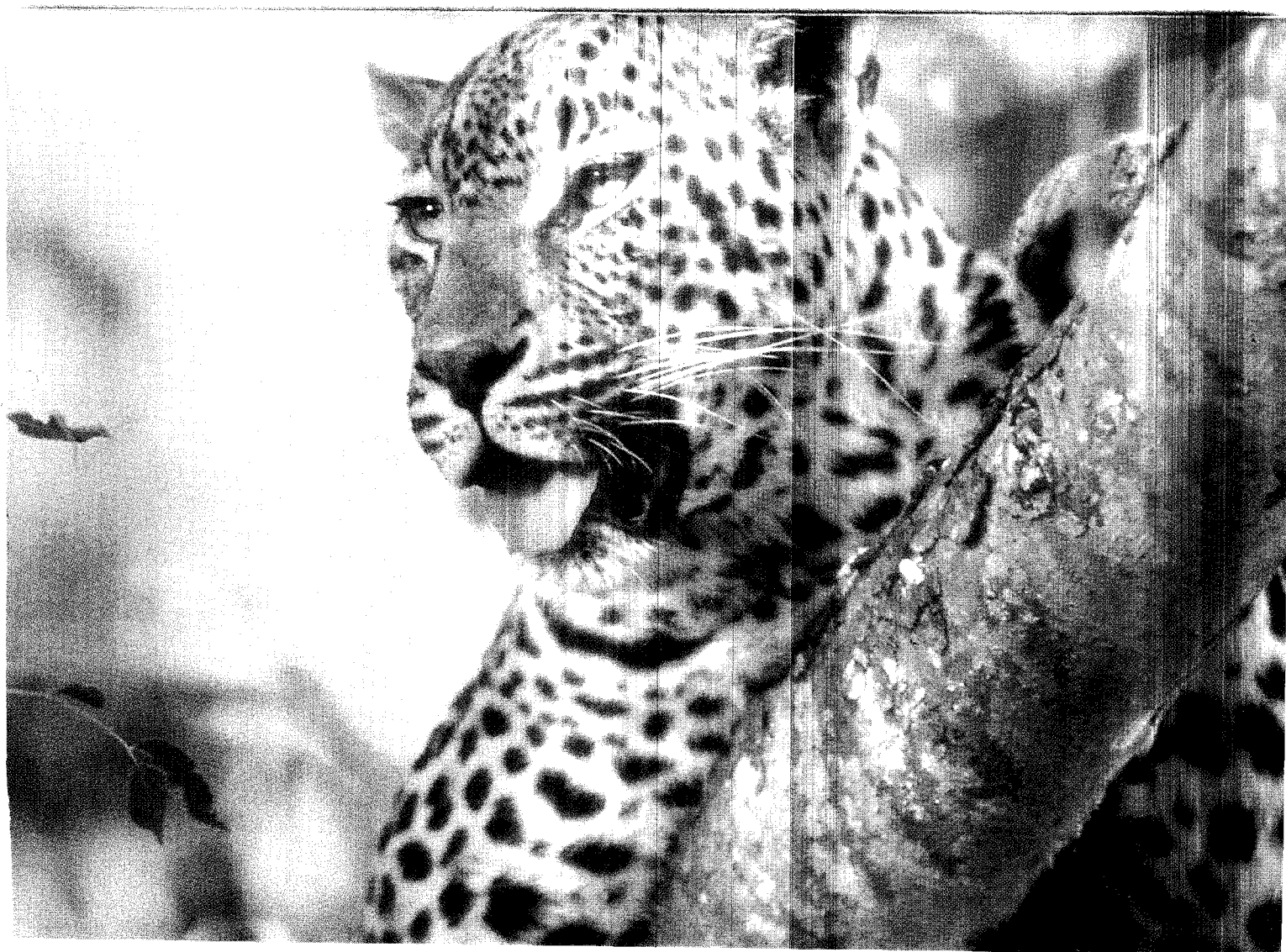
children. That kind of talk is no longer acceptable in the United States, but the widespread use of toxic chemicals is still tolerated, and the Clinton Administration is talking about relaxing some of the laws that have been passed to prevent the sale



of food containing cancer-producing chemicals.

This spring, the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* published a study showing that women with the highest exposure to DDT have a risk of developing breast cancer four times as great as that of women with the least exposure. Public-health officials have pointed out that these findings may have extraordinary implications for the prevention of breast cancer, which now afflicts one out of every eight or nine women in the United States.

Rachel Carson lives. ♦

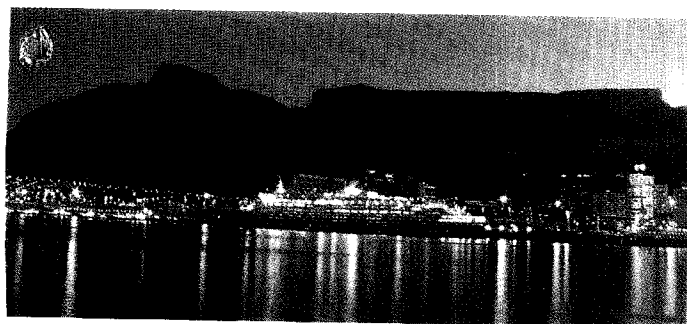


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